



THE BUFFALO BILL STORIES

A WEEKLY PUBLICATION
DEVOTED TO BORDER HISTORY

Issued Weekly. By Subscription \$2.50 per year. Entered as Second Class Matter at New York Post Office by STREET & SMITH, 238 William St., N. Y.

No. 32.

Price, Five Cents.



IT WAS ONE OF THOSE RUNNING SHOTS OF WHICH BUFFALO BILL IS A PERFECT MASTER.—(CHAPTER CXLI.)



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BUFFALO BILL'S VICTORIES.

By the author of "BUFFALO BILL."

CHAPTER CXLI.

BUFFALO BILL, "CHIPS IN" ON TIME.

"Overland City" sounded big, but it was great in name only, for in reality it was a den of thieves, as far as the majority of its people went, and could only boast of being the toughest place on the great Overland Trail, as was shown by the fact that its graveyard had as many occupants as had the town itself, and those who had gone to their long sleep in the village of the dead, had, with very rare exceptions, "died with their boots on."

It was a place on the Overland Stage Trail where the trails crossed, and the "city" consisted of a few dozen shanties scattered about a large structure known as the Overland Inn.

Seen from the trail coming over the mountains, when he got within view of the place, Buffalo Bill likened it to a hen and chickens.

There were mines not far away, a few settlers scattered about the valley, and it was important from a

stage point of view, and one which passengers never forgot during a lifetime.

The tavern was a board and log structure, with a very large barroom, small bedrooms, and no comfort anywhere, while the meals obtained in the Overland Inn were something to remember.

Perhaps five hundred souls dwelt in Overland City, and the main business of the place was staging, drinking and gambling.

There were sheds for the stage horses, and others for the stages, while here and there gathered scores of men and youths connected with the Overland line.

Those important personages—the stage drivers—had their homes there, and then there were wagons and teams to transfer settlers from Overland City to any point off the line where they wished to go.

The Pony Express also had Overland City for its station, and a dozen of the small, sinewy riders could be seen there at any time.

A number of saloons, three stores, a wagon and a

blacksmith shop, and half-a-dozen gambling dens could be seen.

The rest of the "city" was made up of boarding-houses, such as they were—for there was not a private dwelling in the place, as all took boarders.

It was nearing noon when Buffalo Bill came in sight of Overland City, and at a point on the mountains twelve miles away.

He had turned into the stage trail a mile back, and saw the tracks of a coach which had just gone by toward the station.

In fact, as he drew rein, he could hear the distant rumbling of the coach ahead.

He decided not to halt for dinner, but to go on to Overland City, and, as he rode into full view of it far down the valley, he stopped for a few minutes to enjoy the grand view spread out before him, and then it was that he likened the station with its big tavern and sheds, and smaller houses scattered about, to a hen and her chickens.

He was about to continue on his way when he heard a loud command ring up from the valley; the rumbling of wheels ceased, and all was silence.

The scout knew but too well that terrifying command:

"Halt! and hands up!"

The coach had been halted by road-agents.

How many, Buffalo did not stop to ask, or consider.

He was not a man to count odds.

Upon the border his duty was to protect those who needed his aid, uphold the weak against the strong, to support the law against the lawless.

With a word to his horse, he was off down the winding stage trail toward the scene, and, suddenly turning a bend, dashed upon the coach and those who had halted it.

There were two of them—one standing in front of the horses, his rifle leveled at the driver's head, the other standing by the side of the coach, revolver in hand, demanding the money and jewels of what passengers there were.

The ground was soft on the trail, and the coming

of Buffalo Bill had not been heard by the road-agents, though the keen ears of the driver had detected it.

The moment he came upon the scene, Buffalo Bill saw that but one man stood in the way of the forward movement of the coach, and quick as a flash he leveled his revolver.

It was one of those running shots, of which he was the master.

His nerve and aim did not fail him now when he was firing at a human being any more than when he aimed at a target, for his bullet sunk into the outlaw's head.

The moment the man fell, the driver gained his nerve, and his whip fell upon the backs of the horses, and away dashed the coach, trampling and crunching over the body of the road-agent.

The man who was at the coach door was taken completely by surprise, for he was about to secure a very rich booty from an army paymaster, who was the only passenger.

But the open door, as the coach dashed on, knocked the outlaw down, and his revolver fell from his hand.

Around the bend swept the coach, the driver only anxious to take care of himself and his passenger, and leaving his daring rescuer to his fate, if he could not fight his way out.

But still the road-agent had not seen from whence came the shot, and, half-stunned by the door striking him and his fall, he was incapable almost of resistance when the scout drew rein over him, sprung from his horse, and, revolver in hand, tore the mask from his face, while he cried:

"Hands up, pard! or die!"

But, with the words, the mask had been torn off, and then came from the lips of the scout in amazement:

"Boss Brewer, the stagemaster!"

"You a road-agent? The very man I came to find."

"Buffalo Bill," gasped the stagemaster.

"Yes."

"Then I am a dead man."

"Your comrade is, there."

"Yes; you killed him?"

"I did, and you deserve the same fate."

"I know it, and I suppose I will hang."

"Are there any more of you?"

"No."

"You are sure?"

"Only we two."

"Who is he?"

"One of my men at the station."

"You are still stagemaster at Overland City?"

"I was, up to date, but it's over now."

"Who was the driver of the coach?"

"Cal Kirk."

"I do not know him."

"No; a new hand from eastward, or he'd not have run off and left you."

"Why did you put your neck in the noose by such an act, Boss Brewer?"

"Oh, Lord! Buffalo Bill, it's a sad story."

"I had laid up a snug pile, and I got to gambling, and it all went—my house, horses and all—and I was to be sold out in the town where I lived, and where my old mother has her home, for she is old and feeble."

"I was desperate, Buffalo Bill, and I knew from papers that I got that a paymaster was coming through on Kirk's coach to-day, with a large sum of money, and so I was tempted to get it."

"I would not have robbed a man or woman for anything, but the government would not miss it, and out of all the stock I had saved and all I had done for the soldiers, I had never even been thanked."

"So I just told the man lying there to help me, and we would play road-agent, and get the paymaster's money."

"He left Overland City yesterday, and I came out this morning, and we met here, put on these clothes and masks, and—well, you know the rest, and, Buffalo Bill, you will hang me, I know."

Buffalo Bill was silent for a minute, and lost in thought.

At last he said:

"Who is that dead man?"

"One of the black sheep of the Overland layout, Buffalo Bill."

"He has no kin in Overland City?"

"None in all the world, Buffalo Bill, that I have ever heard of."

"Good! Now, can I trust you, Boss?"

"Yes, indeed, for I'm as penitent now as a whipped cur."

"You are sure you were not recognized by Kirk?"

"Sure; he would never know me in this rig and the mask there."

"And the paymaster?"

"I don't know him."

"What excuse can you offer for being away from Overland City?"

"I don't know."

"Have you a horse?"

"I came on foot."

"And your pard?"

"His horse is in the thicket yonder."

"Leave him there, and now tell me one thing."

"Yes, Bill."

"Is there not a near cut on foot to Overland City you can take?"

"Yes; it is half the distance of the stage trail."

"Well, Boss, I will tell you that I came here to see you."

"To see me?"

"Yes; you were wagon master years ago for a settler by the name of Ranger Golden?"

"Yes, yes, twelve years ago. I remember now. He and his whole people were afterward massacred by the Sioux."

"Well, that is the man I have come to see you about, and I just have this to say to you."

"Yes?"

"I believe your story about this intended robbery and that you are repentant now."

"Lord knows I am. If I could undo my act I would be a happy man."

"Well, I am going to trust you, for there is a chance for you to reform your life, and I'll help you."

"Oh, pard!"

"As no one knows you are the robber, I'll go in to Overland City, carrying that dead man. I'll report that his comrade left, which will be the truth.

"You strike out on foot for Overland City; make good time, and meet me there to-night.

"Then we will talk over the Golden matter, and there may be some money in it for you."

"I'll do just as you tell me, Buffalo Bill."

"If you do not meet me in Overland City to-night, then I will tell that you were the other road-agent, and I'll hunt you down as sure as my name is William Cody, mark my words."

"I won't fail you, Buffalo Bill—I will be there."

"As your comrade was killed, as you did not get the money, and as I believe it is your first offense, I will keep your secret and see what I can do for you. Now be off, and lose no time in getting to Overland City. I will get the horse and come on with the body."

"I'll be there, never fear," and, wringing the scout's hand, the stagemaster, with an awed glance at his dead comrade, bounded away down the trail to go on foot to Overland City.

In the thicket indicated, Buffalo Bill found the dead man's horse, and, strapping the body to the saddle, he mounted his own horse, and rode down the stage trail to the station, which he knew would be in a furor of excitement at the report of the holding up of the stage, as soon as Cal Kirk got in to tell his story.

At one place in the trail he saw far on the trail, and his fieldglass, which he never went without, showed the coach thundering along the valley, half-a-dozen miles ahead.

"That fellow, Kirk, is frightened half out of his wits, and will kill his team at the rate he is going.

"I suppose I'll have a hundred men coming out to kill or capture the road-agents.

"Well, I believe Brewer was in earnest in what he said about it being his first sin of the kind.

"The temptation was too much for him, and it was lucky that his pard handed in his chips, for, if he had not been killed, then I would have had to tell on him, too.

"I ought to do so now, I suppose, but I want to find out all he knows about the Golden affair, and I guess he will profit by the fright and the lesson he has had, and not go wrong any more.

"At least, I hope so; and if he does, why, I can find him.

"But how that wild driver goes!

"He'll resign from the trail after this, I'm sure," and, with a laugh at the man's fright, Buffalo Bill coolly went on, leading the horse with his dead master tied to the saddle by the stake rope.

When he arrived within half a mile of Overland City, he saw half a hundred mounted men coming toward him at a gallop, and all armed to the teeth.

CHAPTER CXLII.

COWARD.

The driver of the coach that had been held up was a new hand.

Or rather, though a splendid driver, his run had been further East, where such a thing as a road-agent was unknown.

He had been on several trips out of Overland City, and had gone through in safety and on time.

But, then, no one looked for a stage to be held up within twenty miles of Overland City, and it was said that the road-agents had all left the neighborhood.

When, then, Cal Kirk beheld a man step out of the thicket with a rifle leveled at him, and take a stand in front of his leaders, and another appear with a revolver, while he uttered these ominous words, "Halt! and hands up!" Kirk was not the man to disobey the command.

He halted with dispatch, dropped his reins upon his knees and held up his hands with alacrity.

There was in the coach, he knew, a paymaster of the United States Army.

He had been told that the paymaster carried considerable money, and was directed to put him through in safety.

But, with trembling limbs, he sat upon the box, his hands elevated, and wondering if he was to be allowed to go on with his life.

Then came the fall of hoofs, and the scout dashed into sight.

A shot dropped the man before his leaders, and Cal Kirk sent his team ahead with a rush.

It was lucky that he was a splendid driver, or he would have dashed the stage to destruction.

But he kept his flying horses on the trail, his foot upon the brake, and went on in the same mad rush, and unheeding the calls of the paymaster to halt.

It was down hill, and that caused the horses to fairly fly.

The crunching of bones as the wheels passed over the dead road-agent yet resounded in his ears, and his heart was in a tremor of fear and horror.

The valley was reached, yet still he pushed his team to a run.

Had the rescuer been killed, and would the outlaws pursue?

How many more outlaws were there than he had seen?

Such thoughts filled his brain as he urged along, and not until the first cabins in Overland City were close at hand did he draw rein.

Several times had the paymaster called to the driver to slacken up and see if the road-agents were following.

Then he asked him to halt and turn back and see what had become of their brave rescuer.

But Cal Kirk would neither halt nor slacken rein.

It was Kirk that he wished to save from the road-agents, and only when safe in the tavern would he feel that his life was spared.

When he blew his horn to announce his coming it had a wild, weird, startled sound that brought the people out quickly to welcome the incoming coach.

Then they stood before the Overland Inn—a hun-

dred or more—and a glance was sufficient to show them that something had happened on the trail.

Once he put his foot upon the brakes and came to a halt, Kirk felt his importance.

He saw himself a hero, for his coach had been held up on the way and had escaped—by his own prowess.

That was the way he wanted it, and so he would put it.

"Pards, all, I was held up on the mountain by a gang of road-agents, but pushed over them, and here I am."

So said Cal Kirk; but out of the coach sprang the paymaster.

His face was white with anger and his eyes flashed as he cried, as soon as the cheer had subsided that greeted the driver's words:

"You infamous liar and coward, you ran off and left the brave man who came to our rescue to fight it out against the road-agents alone, after he had killed one."

"That man is a splendid driver, men, but he has no right to sit on the coach box when he acts as he did to-day."

Kirk was terribly aroused, but he did not draw at the angry words of the army officer.

He was not "on the shoot" against one whom he saw meant what he said.

So he replied, doggedly:

"You army officers say what you please, because the government protects you; if you was any one else, I'd——"

"Bah! you would not dare draw a weapon to use it. You are a coward and you know it. Don't talk to me! I am out of all patience with you, for the man you deserted was Buffalo Bill."

"Buffalo Bill, was it?" cried many voices.

"Yes, the chief of scouts at Fort Beal, where I was stationed some months ago. Come, men; who will follow me back to the scene?"

A hundred voices answered with a ringing:

"I will!"

"Then get your horses, and I will secure a mount

and lead you back to see if Buffalo Bill is dead or alive."

But it was an hour before all were in readiness to start, and then, as the cavalcade got out on the trail, they beheld Buffalo Bill coming toward them at a canter, the led horse following with a dead body hanging across the saddle.

"Where is Boss Brewer?"

"Where is Boss Brewer?"

These were the cries that went up on all sides as the men about the Overland Inn sought to procure horses on which to follow the brave paymaster back to the scene where Cal Kirk's coach had been held up.

The boss was in charge of the Overland horses belonging to the Pony Express Company and coach line, and, without his say-so, they could not be taken out.

The boss was known to be a great hunter, and the stablemen said he was off on a hunt somewhere; but they dared not let the coach horses or Pony Express animals go out in his absence.

In vain the men pleaded; the stable boys were firm.

"We knows the boss, and don't you forget it.

"If he was here it would be all right; but if we'd let 'em go without his say-so, then, when he comes in, he'd begin to practice shootin' on us.

"Oh, we knows him, we does."

As the men willing to wade in road-agents' gore had no horses of their own, for outside of the coach and Pony Express animals, horses were scarce in Overland City, they did not know what to do, and went scouring over the place in search of something to ride.

In the meantime, the paymaster had gone into the inn and called the landlord aside.

He asked for the man in charge of the coaches, and he was sent for.

It was Boss Brewer and he could not be found.

Then Paymaster Lloyd informed the landlord that he had fifty thousand dollars in government money in his keeping, and this had to be put away in a safe place.

This was done, and a receipt given for it, after which the paymaster asked for a horse on which to lead his band of volunteers to the rescue.

The landlord did not aspire to horsemanship.

Walking was good enough for him, and, as he weighed three hundred pounds, he did not, as a merciful man, feel that he had a right to keep a horse.

"Where can I get one?" asked the army officer.

"If the boss was here, at the Overland stables."

"Where is this man, Boss Brewer, as you call him?"

"Off on a hunt, the stable boys say."

"Then I will take a horse."

But when the paymaster emerged into the open air, he saw that his anticipated cavalry had degenerated into foot soldiers.

He belonged to the cavalry himself, and this would never do, so he demanded a reason.

He very soon got it in full, and with emphasis most decided against the stable boys.

"I can fix that," he said. And he did, for, upon the authority of a United States officer, he seized the stables of the Overland Company, and the volunteers were mounted forthwith.

There were, doubtless, a number in that motley gang who were outlaws, in hiding themselves, and regretting that they had not been along to rope in the paymaster; but, under the garb of honest men, they now went forth to capture the road-agents.

One and all had heard of Buffalo Bill, and many knew him, so that when the scout was discovered a wild yell went up from the crowd.

"Buffalo Bill, we were going to your aid," cried the paymaster.

"Paymaster Lloyd, I am glad to see you. It was you, then, whom the road-agents were after?" said Buffalo Bill, as the paymaster ranged alongside and shook hands with him.

"Yes, but thanks to your coming I was not robbed, and I shall so report it at headquarters, Cody.

"I was asleep when the coach was halted, and

woke up to find the door open and a revolver in my face.

"It was useless to kick or plead. I was caught, and the fellow knew I carried big money, so I was forced to fork over.

"I delayed all I could, and was hoping for aid, when lo! I heard a shot, and then the coach dashed off, knocking the masked leader down.

"I looked back and saw you, and alone. You took big chances, Bill."

"There were only two that I could see, Mr. Lloyd, and, though I got this one across the horse, here, the other escaped capture."

"What a pity; but this one you certainly did get."

"Oh, yes, sir; he is all right, and when we get him up to the inn some one may be able to recognize him.

"Shall we ride back, sir, for I am tired and hungry as a bear, having come in from Fort Beal?"

"Yes, we will go back at once; but how are all at the dear old fort?"

"All goes well, sir; but who was the driver of that coach?"

"A man known as Kirk, one not used to outlaws."

"He is used to running, sir, for, if he didn't hoof it down that mountain, I am a sinner.

"Why, it is a wonder that he did not break your neck and his own, too."

"His would have been no loss, for I told him he was a coward."

"Then I need not do so, as I intended, or he may believe it," was the scout's cool rejoinder, just as they rode up to the inn and were greeted with a wild hurrah for "Buffalo Bill, the Prince of the Plains."

CHAPTER CXLIII.

KIRK RECEIVES GOOD ADVICE.

Upon arriving at the Overland Inn, Buffalo Bill at once secured a room, while Paymaster Lloyd was to take the stage eastward, the scout telling him that he believed there was no danger of another attempt to rob him, but, if he wished, he would escort him beyond the danger line.

But this the paymaster declined, and so started upon his way on the incoming coach, from the northward, and aboard which he was glad enough to find several soldiers going East on furlough, and who would be a protection to him and his money.

Cal Kirk, the driver, had not gone on the hunt for the road-agents.

He dared not trust himself so far from civilization, with a party of men who had seen him fall from his exalted pinnacle as a driver to a man accused of cowardice.

The more he regarded the situation in the light of what he had done, the more he felt convinced that he had acted in a very shabby way.

"It'll stick to me, unless I ups and shoots the paymaster.

"That will square me with the boys, but, then, it might get my neck into a rope cravat.

"I'll see what Boss Brewer has to say about it."

Kirk had gone to his room after his denunciation by the paymaster, one of the best rooms, too, in the inn, by the way, though that was not saying much in its favor.

He saw the road-agent hunters ride off, and was thinking of going in search of Boss Brewer, when he heard a step go by his door.

The stable master had the room beyond Kirk's, so he knew it must be he, and, glad that he had not to go out and look him up, he at once went to his door and knocked.

"Come in," said a faint voice.

The stable boss was there, his face dripping wet and pale, his eyes sunken, and his whole manner that of a man who had been in some trouble.

"It's you, is it, Kirk?" said the boss, not rising from his chair, and his hand resting as though by accident upon his revolver.

"Yes, boss, and I've come to have a talk with you; but what in thunder is the matter?"

"I was hunting, and a man told me that there was trouble in Overland City, and that all the horses had been taken from the coach stables, so I ran all the way here."

"Well, you look it; but it's only that infernal paymaster, who took them to go and hunt down the road-agents who attacked my coach."

"Ah! that is it, is it?"

"Yes."

"So your coach was held up, Kirk?" and the man breathed more freely.

"Yes; I should say it was."

"I have not been told this, but it is true that I came right to my room. Tell me about it, Cal."

"Well, it was back in the mountains, twelve miles from here, that a gang of road-agents held me up."

"How many of them?"

"Lord knows, but I counted half-a-dozen."

"Yes."

"And they went for the paymaster, as was inside, and had lots of money."

"Did they get it?"

"No, for Buffalo Bill and his scouts came up, and killed one; so I drove on for all I was worth, not wishing the paymaster to be robbed."

"The paymaster, as soon as I got here, said I was a liar and a coward, and I want to ask you if I had not better kill him to square myself with the boys?"

"Did he say it to your face?"

"Yes, and before the whole crowd, who gave me the laugh, groan and hiss."

"Because you ran off?"

"Yes."

"Well, Kirk, I think the paymaster was so near right that, as you did not do it then, to do so now would be to get you lynched."

"You did act in a mean way to desert your rescuer, and the only thing I can say for you to do is to take the first coach East, for you may be sure the boys won't let you live on the Overland trail, and I'd change my name, too, if I was in your place."

"So you say I acted like a coward, too?"

"I say you acted the part of a cowardly cur, and if you don't like my language, resent it now—and not wait to shoot me in the back."

"But I have given you good advice, and you had better take it."

"I can get my money, I suppose?"

"I'll give you an order on the Overland paymaster for your money, and a free ride back over the line."

"Now, go and get ready, Kirk, for if you stay here the boys will do you harm, mark my words."

"I'll go, you bet."

"Well, come here soon, and get your money order, and then light out down the trail to take the coach, for there will be trouble if you leave from the tavern."

"I'll do it, and I rely upon you, Boss, not to let them hunt me," said the cringing coward.

"Do as I tell you, then," and the boss dismissed the man, and then set to work to get himself in presentable shape.

He had plunged through streams, slid down hills, gone through thickets at a run, and was tattered, wet, mud-covered and tired.

But he put on some clean clothes, after washing up, took a stiff drink of whisky, and then went down into the stable yard, where he was met by the paymaster and the men, who were returning the stage horses pressed into service for the hunt after the road-agents.

"Ho, boss, how are you, pard?" cried Buffalo Bill, and the station master went forward to greet the scout, his heart and brain in a whirl, though he was outwardly calm.

"I've got a dead man here, boss, whom the boys say is one of your stablemen," and Buffalo Bill pointed to the body across a horse, and which the station master approached in a timid sort of way.

Who can tell what were the feelings of Boss Brewer as he moved up to the body of the man whom he had tempted to become his ally in an act of crime which had cost him his life?

William Brewer was getting along in years, for his hair and beard were iron-gray.

He had dwelt long upon the frontier, and he had held a place of trust for many years, though he was known to be a dangerous man.

What money he had accumulated he had sent East, and bought the home where his old mother dwelt, and, led into desperation by gambling, he had mortgaged it to the landlord of the Overland Inn, who at last threatened to sell him out unless it was paid.

It was this situation which had driven him to rob the government, and in the dead body of his comrade, and in the presence of Buffalo Bill, he saw the result of his evil scheming.

The stableman had once saved the life of the boss, and he was greatly attached to him, and men spoke of "Andy" as the "pet of the boss."

Now, every eye was upon him, as he advanced and gazed upon the dead face.

He started back, for the open eyes glared into his own when he removed the mask.

He acted well his part, as Buffalo Bill thought, for the eye of the scout was upon him.

"Andy! What does this mean?" he cried, excitedly.

"It means, Boss, that he was one of the men who held up Kirk's stage in the mountains, for I killed him, standing at the head of the leaders, his rifle covering the driver.

"I shot him, but his comrade got off easy.

"That is all there is to it, except that you had better muster your men, find out who is missing, and make them give a strict account of their absence, for this looks bad."

"It does look bad, Buffalo Bill, and it is bad, very bad.

"Tobe, call all the men together, and I will see who is missing.

"Then take this body away and have it buried."

The men were mustered, those who were asleep being called out, too, and, fortunate it was for them, not one was missing.

Andy had been the only black sheep in the band of forty-odd stablemen.

Night now came on, and in the saloons, the holding up of the coach, the cowardice of Kirk and the treachery of Andy filled every mouth.

At last the east-bound coach came in, and the passengers took their leave, the paymaster going also, and riding with the driver.

Then, as the men had begun to drink heavily, mischief began to brew, and it was decided to take Kirk out and hang him.

A coward could not be tolerated upon the Overland trail.

So the crowd, inspired by a drunken leader, made a rush for the room of Kirk.

The door was open, the room in disorder, and the driver was gone.

The men were wild with rage, and sought Boss Brewer for an explanation.

He simply said that he wanted no such man in his employ, that in his fright he had driven his team to death, and so he had discharged him, while, fearing trouble, he supposed the man had gone down the valley to take the coach away from Overland City.

The crowd then went howling away, to see if Kirk

had really left the place, for they were on the war-path for blood and meant to have it.

Finding that the driver had escaped them, they compromised by going to the cabin where Andy's body lay, and, taking it out, gave it a midnight burial, with "three cheers and a tiger" as a burial ceremony over the unfortunate stableman.

They were determined to put down lawlessness in Overland City, they said, and after the burial they returned to the saloon and got drunk all around, ending up in a row that cost two lives and many hurts and swelled heads.

In the meantime, a somewhat strange scene was going on in the private room of Landlord Lund, of the Overland Inn.

That worthy had become a very rich man of late years, and the more he got, the more he wanted, until he became a perfect gouge, and grasped at every means of getting gold, fair or foul.

Buffalo Bill had known the man years before, and, whatever hold he had upon him, he determined to use it in behalf of Boss Brewer.

So he went to the stableman's room and said:

"See here, Boss, the talk I want with you cannot take place to-night, but when I leave to-morrow, you accompany me on the trail a few miles, for I have something to say to you of importance."

"I will, Bill; I'll do anything you say."

"Now, let me tell you that I'm superstitious on the point of good or bad luck."

"You are?"

"Yes."

"How so?"

"Well, I think you were playing in great luck to-day not to catch my bullet."

"Oh, Bill!"

"You got here on time, which was lucky, and you stood the ordeal well of facing Andy's body."

"My God!"

"Now, you are having a run of luck, and I want you to go to Landlord Lund and challenge him to play you three games for what he holds of yours."

"But I have nothing to stake against it."

"Give him your I. O. U., and I'll indorse it.

"Come, let us see if your luck has deserted you."

"He won't play."

"He will," was Buffalo Bill's decided rejoinder.

CHAPTER CXLIV.

A GAME OF CHANCE.

Landlord Lund was seated in what he called his "parlor" when Buffalo Bill and the boss knocked at his door.

It was his parlor, bedroom and office combined, and it was arranged with a special view to his own protection in case of trouble.

It was of logs, and boarded without, while a tunnel ran from the cellar to a point some distance away, where the landlord had a pard ever ready to aid him.

No one knew the ups and downs of life better than Landlord Lund.

He was counting over his gold, a favorite amusement of his, when Buffalo Bill and the stable master came.

But he had hastily put it away before admitting them, and had reconnoitered from a secret point of observation to see who were his visitors before doing so.

"Sit down, Buffalo Bill, and you, too, boss, and we'll have a glass while you tell me what I can do for you," he said, getting out a bottle and glasses as he spoke.

"The boys are on the war-trail hot to-night, for it broke them all up to have Kirk show the cur and Andy play the road-agent.

"It hits you, too, rather hard, boss."

"Yes, for I wish my men to go straight."

"Here's to you, gents, and now say if you came for a social call or on business."

Boss looked at Buffalo Bill, and the latter said:

"We came on a little matter of business, Lund, for Boss Brewer has been telling me how he got into a losing streak in gambling, and you won all he had laid up in years."

"Yes, but he would not heed my warning and quit."

"I never knew you to warn me, landlord, and you bought up every debt I owed any one else."

"Yes, for they would have given you trouble—pressing you."

"Yet you cowed me."

"I've been awful patient, Boss, for I've waited six months."

"How much do you owe Lund, Boss?"

"He holds my house in the East, my horses here,

my watch and chain, and claims on three months' wages in all."

"What does it foot up?"

"Well, the place is worth five thousand, the horses a thousand more, the watch and chain were given to me by the drivers, and cost five hundred, and there is three months' pay at three hundred."

"Nearly seven thousand dollars?"

"Yes."

"Well, play Lund for it now, best two in three games."

"What has he got to put up against it?" asked the landlord.

"His I. O. U."

"It's no good."

"I'll indorse it."

"What's your interest in this game, Buffalo Bill?"

"Oh, I have known Boss Brewer for some time, and don't wish to see him lose all without a chance to win it back."

"He doesn't get it without putting up good money."

"I said I would indorse his paper."

"What have you got?"

"Mighty little, it is true, besides my outfit and horses, and a few hundred in the paymaster's hands."

"Then you indorse what is no good."

"I have the liberty, though, to draw upon White Beaver Powell if Boss Brewer loses."

The landlord started, and his face changed color, but he said:

"Well, I'll play, so come right into the saloon."

"No, the game is to be played right here."

"Why?"

"I prefer it."

"I'll send for a pack of cards, then."

"No, for I have a pack here never opened."

"I prefer my own pack."

"I know that, but you do not play with any pack you may get. Understand, Lund, this is to be a square game."

"What do you mean?"

"Bah! don't assume the virtuous, Lund, for you know we were pards long ago, and I have a good memory, so do as I say or I will go and ask White Beaver Powell to come here and play a game with you."

Whatever dread there might be in the magic name of the surgeon scout, it had the effect of command-

ing obedience from Landlord Lund, for, with a muttered oath, he sat down to the table, cleared a space and said gruffly:

"Where are your cards?"

"Here."

"Are they square?"

"Oh, yes, for you have not had the handling of them."

A muttered oath was the landlord's only reply, and, seating himself at the table, Boss Brewer wrote out the I. O. U. and Buffalo Bill indorsed his name upon it, with the following lines above it:

"To be presented for payment to Dr. Frank Powell, 'White Beaver, the Surgeon Scout,' in case it is not paid by William Brewer."

"That goes," said Buffalo Bill, quietly, as the landlord glanced over it.

Lund made no reply, but chewed his lips, and the cards were cut for deal and dealt.

"Best two in three, is it?"

"Yes, landlord," answered Boss Brewer.

Both men were noticeably nervous, but the scout stood looking on, unmoved.

The boss won the first game, and at once became perfectly calm, as Buffalo Bill remarked:

"Your luck is good."

But Landlord Lund became the more nervous.

The second game the boss won, and the landlord gave a groan, while he said:

"This is robbery to force a man to play."

"It was played with unmarked cards, Lund, and you are the robber."

"Come, hand over the claim papers and property of Boss Brewer that you hold."

The landlord obeyed without a word, and, rising, the two men left the room and went to their own.

"How did you control that tiger, Buffalo Bill, as you did?" asked the stable master.

"Oh, I saved his neck once, years ago, when he was caught cheating at the mines, and Dr. Powell knows a secret about him that would stretch his neck, that's all."

"And you have saved me, for I shall never touch a card again or a drop of liquor."

"I am a new man, Buffalo Bill, and I owe it to you that I am," was Brewer's trembling reply.

The morning after his strange adventures, Boss Brewer rose with a comparatively light heart.

It is true, that his crime of holding up the coach

weighed upon him, but he bitterly repented that mad act, and had decided to lead a different life to atone for it.

He had his property back again, looked at his handsome watch and chain over and over again, went to the stables and petted his horses, and mailed East a deed to his little home, putting it in his mother's name.

He glanced wistfully at the bar, where he had always gotten his morning "eye-opener," then braced up courage and walked in.

"The same, boss?" asked the bartender.

"No, Ike, I won't try anything this morning."

"My Lord, you hain't sick, be you?"

"No, but I've cut rum."

"Cut rum?"

"Yes."

"For how long?"

"Forever."

"So they all say."

"Well, see if I do not tell the truth," and, with another wistful glance at the tempting bottles, Boss Brewer passed out.

He met Landlord Lund outside and said good-morning.

The salutation was not returned, and then came gruffly:

"See here, Brewer, I've got parties that want the room you've got, so just vacate to-day."

"I shall be glad to, now that I know what kind of a landlord I have had."

"But don't go too brisk, or the boys might hear a story I could tell."

"Go slow with me, and I keep a quiet tongue—see?"

The landlord evidently did see, for he said no more.

The stable master breakfasted with Buffalo Bill, and told him how Andy had been buried by the moral community of Overland City, who had finished up by causing two more funerals.

"I don't know any other life, Buffalo Bill, or I would leave it; but if I don't gamble or drink, I can make money and lay it up, and in a couple of years or so will have enough to go home and take care of the old lady."

"That is right, Boss, and I believe you will stick to your resolve."

"Now, I must be off, and, under pretense of visit-

ing the scene of the road-agents' attack yesterday, go with me."

"I'll be ready, Buffalo Bill, in half-an-hour."

A crowd gathered about Buffalo Bill when he went out in front of the tavern after breakfast, and when, soon after, he rode off with the boss, men wondered why Landlord Lund did not say good-morning.

"How far is your camp from here, Bill?"

"I have no camp nearer than Fort Beal."

"Why, you said last night you would go to camp after Surgeon Powell."

"That was a bluff."

"And it went."

"Oh, yes, I knew it would, for if there is a man on earth that Landlord Lund fears, it is Dr. Powell.

"But, now, Boss, I have some questions to ask you, so let us halt here."

They did so, and Buffalo Bill got out his notebook and pencil.

"You were a wagon master for Ranger Golden, a settler, years ago?"

"Yes."

"How was it?"

"He came out West, as I remember it, with his family."

"How many?"

"His wife, little child, and his wife's younger brother, a handsome and fine fellow of sixteen, I guess."

"That was all?"

"There were two negroes, a man and a woman."

"Well?"

"He came in one coach with them, and the other coaches and an ambulance brought his baggage and provisions, and he had plenty.

"I remember, too, there were some cattle, sheep and fowls, and all else to make them comfortable."

"And then?"

"They stayed several days at a station where I then had charge, Medicine Mound, you know it was, and he hired some men to go with him, cowboys up from Texas they were."

"Yes?"

"And he engaged me and an outfit of wagons to take them to their new home."

"And you did so?"

"I did."

"Well?"

"We were a week on the trail, and he acted as guide, for he had been to the settlement and bought a ranch there, and a good one, for I was surprised when I saw it."

"Did you get well acquainted with his family?"

"You bet I did, and they were just as nice people as I ever saw."

"What about his wife?"

"She was a beauty, and very young.

"She was a Southern lady, she told me—a planter's daughter."

"And the child?"

"Was a smart little one."

"What was its name?"

"They called it only baby, as I recollect."

"And the boy?"

"Her brother?"

"Yes."

"They called him Hugh, I think."

"And her name?"

"His wife?"

"Yes."

"Her husband called her Cille, as I remember, and I now recall she said her name was Lucille Hammond, and she was so sweet, so good, all of us loved her, and the baby, too."

"You knew nothing of Mr. Golden?"

"Only what he told me, that he was an Englishman, had been a soldier and a sailor, and was in the mines out here for a while.

"Then he became a settler."

"Have you heard from them since?"

"I heard that the Indians raided the valley and killed all the settlers, and mighty sad I felt over it."

"Well, Boss, I thank you for what you have told me, and if I have to send for you I wish you to come, for it will be important."

"I'll come, Buffalo Bill, if you say the word, for never will I forget you," and tears came into eyes that had not known a tear since childhood.

Soon after the two parted, the stable master to return to Overland City, and Buffalo Bill to start for the fort, well pleased with what he had accomplished.

CHAPTER CXLV.

DEATH GAP.

Buffalo Bill parted with Boss Brewer with a firm belief in his reformation and honesty of purpose.

He saw that the narrow escape he had made had

been a great shock to him, and would make a lasting impression.

He wished to feel that the man would not go astray again.

Having accomplished the purpose of his errand, gleaned all the information he could from the man who had taken Ranger Golden to his frontier home, he felt that there was little more to do.

"I will hurry back, for I will have a couple of days' rest at the fort, I guess, before starting for Massacre Valley," said the scout to himself, and he pressed on more rapidly.

He wished to camp but once on the way, reaching the fort the next night.

Taking advantage of mountain cuts, he shortened his way, and by walking up and down the mountains, thus resting his horse, he made rapid progress.

He did not camp until some time after nightfall, and broke camp very early in the morning, so that he was well on his way when the dawn came.

At noon he halted for an hour, for he saw that at the rate he was going, he would reach the fort by dark if his horse did not give out.

But the animal was a fine one, and, spared all that was possible by his rider, he held on pluckily.

The trail he took back was partly over the one which he had come, especially as he neared the fort.

The sun was yet above the horizon when he crossed the river at the ford above Ranch Isle, and he gazed at the place with considerable interest, even putting his glass to his eyes.

Ranch Isle had always been a place of interest to the scout, in that he looked upon those that dwelt there as a very mysterious party.

"They are a queer outfit, and, somehow, I cannot get to bed rock as to what and who they just are," muttered the scout.

To cut off a mile, he turned into a cañon, which was shunned by all who were at all superstitious.

Even the most plucky confessed that they always shunned the place.

Texas Jack was a scout known to have no fear, but what he had seen one night in the Death Gap, as the cañon was called, caused him to avoid the place ever after.

"I'm not afraid of live men, but I draw the line at dead men, when I see skeletons dancing in the moonlight, and that is what I did see, pard.

"You know, when I got to the fort, I was scared clean through, and my horse had been run to death."

So said Scout Texas Jack, and it was useless to tell him some one had played a joke on him.

"I saw what I saw, and I know a picked skeleton from one with human flesh on it," he would answer.

And if a man of Texas Jack's pluck would avoid the Death Gap, after that the other scouts of the command religiously did the same.

"We'll ride round, for we don't mind cutting off a couple of miles or so," they would say, when told to go through the Gap.

Buffalo Bill had gone through by day and night several times, but he admitted that it was a most desolate place.

The soldiers avoided it, too, and, as for the cowboys and settlers, they never had business to call them in that direction, or said so.

The gap, or cañon, had its unwritten history, and a sad one it was.

A train of emigrants had been caught there by the Indians, and put to death.

They were a jolly party, and they were enjoying a dance by the light of a camp-fire when the attack was made.

The violin and banjo were silenced, the voices of the dancers and the laughter of the children, as a volley of bullets and a shower of arrows came in upon the happy group.

Then followed the wild warwhoops, and, though the men fought bravely for life, and all they loved and possessed, they sunk down under the attack of the outnumbering foe.

The morning sun arose upon a sickening, sad scene, and there lay the massacred emigrants, until the coyotes and the vultures picked their bones, and left them to whiten upon the death-stained sod.

Years after, Captain Taylor's troop of the Fifth Cavalry, scouting to find a good place for a frontier fort, and under the guidance of Buffalo Bill, came upon the spot and decently buried the bones of the dead.

With such a memory haunting the spot, with the stories told of the cañon, it was no wonder that all avoided it.

Captain Taylor had given it the name of Death Gap, and had erected there a monument of stone over the dead.

Then the troop had gone on to pitch upon the spot where Fort Beal was afterward founded.

But, unheeding its memories, unmindful of the ghost stories told of it, Buffalo Bill had decided to cut off a couple of miles, and go through Death Gap to the fort.

Death Gap was a wild-looking place, weird in its surroundings and solitude as well as in its memories.

There was one thing that might have influenced Buffalo Bill in going through that way to the fort, and that was a fresh trail that he saw.

It turned from the main trail toward Death Gap, and was the track of a horse ridden in a canter.

It was a surprise to see the trail going that way, and so Buffalo Bill followed it.

Leaving the prairie lands, he got into the foothills, then came to the rugged country and the ridge which the gap cut through.

The trail still held on toward the gap, and the scout stuck to it.

On he went until the country grew more rugged, and the ridge tops were fringed with pines, and all around was desolation.

The unfortunate victims of the massacre had without doubt penetrated there to seek a good and safe encampment, but which, alas, proved their death camp.

The scout noticed, as he rode along, that the trail he followed, though very fresh, was pursuing the tracks of another horse, which had often gone that way.

"This is strange," he muttered.

"Can any one live in the Death Gap, I wonder?"

The sun had set to him down in the valley, but upon the hilltops its light shone brightly.

"I shall reach the fort a little after dark," he said.

At last the valley narrowed, and he soon found himself under the shadows of the cliffs which formed Death Gap.

It looked gloomy ahead of him, and he saw the spot where the emigrant train had encamped, and he recalled the time of his first coming there, and the horror of all at the discovery of the skeleton forms of the dead.

The stone pile, made in the form of a cross, lying upon the ground, was just before him, not far from a spring, where he was going to give his horse a drink.

A thick growth of pines surrounded the spring, and he could not see through them.

The sod beneath the hoofs of his horse left no sound, and the scout muttered as he glanced about him:

"It is, indeed, a spooky-looking place.

"If it was dark now, I might get a look at the skeleton dance that Texas Jack saw.

"They sell some awful snaky liquor over at the store in the settlement, but I don't see how it could make Jack see a skeleton fandango.

"I'd like to see one myself, for it would be a new sensation to behold a Virginia reel danced by skeletons under the shadow of the cliffs at the spring.

"There goes the trail, straight for the spring, and it was not made by a skeleton horse, I will take oath on.

"Well, I must know who it is that is not afraid to associate with skeletons, and to come here often—from the trails I see—Ah!"

He drew rein suddenly, as he uttered the exclamation, and had his rifle ready for use on the instant.

But he slung it to his back immediately, and rode on, for he saw that he was discovered.

"Their second meeting that I have caught them in," he muttered, as he raised his hat and said aloud:

"This is an unlooked-for pleasure, Miss Bessie, as well as a surprise, to find you and Don Eduardo here, for I thought you both were afraid of Death Gap."

The faces of the man and woman showed deepest chagrin at their discovery by the scout.

They were seated upon the rock monument to the massacred emigrants, while their horses were feeding near by.

They had seen the scout about an instant after his discovery of them, and they seemed speechless with amazement and anger.

But, in response to the words of Buffalo Bill, came the woman's ready answer:

"It is a surprise to see you, also, Buffalo Bill, but I am glad you have come, for I want you as a witness."

"A witness to what, Miss Bessie?"

"Why, Don Eduardo made a wager with me of his beautiful iron-gray mustang, that I would not come here alone at night and place my glove among these rocks as a proof of my being here, and he was to come and find it."

"And you have come?"

"You see me?"

"Yes, but it is not yet dark."

"True, but I intended to place the glove in the spot and wait till night before I left."

"Yes, and I have lost my horse, for Miss Bessie has done what I did not believe she would, brave as she is."

"I could have told you, Don Eduardo, Miss Bessie would not take a dare, but you seemed doubtful of her coming, to be here to watch."

"Yes, wasn't that mean, for, while I was waiting, he rode up, and you should have seen the Don's sheepish look when he found me here."

"I am so glad that I have you as a witness, Buffalo Bill, for now he will have to give me the iron-gray mustang."

"Yes, Don, I am a witness that she came."

"I'll surrender; the horse is yours, Miss Bessie," said the Don, while Bessie Bond asked:

"And, how on earth came you here, Buffalo Bill, for I thought every one dreaded this spot?"

"We all do, Miss Bessie, but I am just back from a long scout, and, as you see, my horse is broken down, so I wish to save him two miles by cutting through the gap, as it was not dark."

"Well, I must return home, and Don, as you go to the fort, you will have company."

"Will you not allow me to escort you, senorita?"

"No, I never do. Good-night, gentlemen."

And, springing into her saddle, the strange girl darted away like an arrow.

CHAPTER CXLVI.

PEOPLE OF MYSTERY.

Buffalo Bill was too true a reader of human nature not to see that his coming was a source of deepest regret, as well as anger, to both Don Eduardo Vincente and Bessie Bond.

He saw their faces pale and flush with the emotions they felt at his surprise of them.

The maiden had shown instant tact in turning it off as she had, that she had come there on a wager, and then the man had seconded her clever ruse.

But the scout had muttered to himself:

"They lied to me."

Not a shadow showed that he had other belief but that they had come as stated.

His manner was pleasant, and he had laughed over

the wager, and joked the Don upon betting upon anything a woman should not do.

"My experience has been, Don Eduardo, not to bet with a woman—nor dare one. You'll get left every time."

"Miss Bessie, too, is the last one to bet against, where her courage is taken into consideration, for she would tackle a bag full of wildcats."

As they rode toward the fort together, Buffalo Bill could see that the Don was trying to regain his composure.

Something had evidently upset him, to move him from the even tenor of his manners, his cool, suave way.

Pretending not to notice this, Buffalo Bill chatted on, which he suddenly broke off by saying:

"You see, Don Eduardo, my horse is used up, so please do not let me delay you, if you care to ride on more rapidly."

"No, indeed, for I like your company, Cody. You must have ridden a long way."

"I have, sir, since I met you on the trail the other day, and you know, after leaving you, I saw trails I could not account for, and, as Miss Bessie had gone on alone, I was anxious about her, so went by her ranch, but found her all right. She's a strange little lady, Don Eduardo, for she never receives company at her home."

"Yes, I have never been invited there myself; it is her mother's wish, I believe; but did you think the trails you saw might be Indian?"

"I did not know, sir, but thought it best to be on the safe side."

"Always, but you have seen nothing suspicious in your scouting?"

"Oh, no, sir."

"Did you go far?"

"Yes, sir; I went to Overland City," was the frank reply.

"It's a long ride, and you made it quickly."

"Yes, sir."

"Did not stay long?"

"No, for my business was soon transacted, for you know the Pony Express riders start from there," and Buffalo Bill led the Don to believe he had taken special documents from the colonel to be sent by the Pony Express riders.

"Oh, yes, and it's a quick way of sending news through, but nothing serious, I hope?"

"No, sir, I guess not, though you know a dispatch bearer is never let into the secrets of the commanding officer."

"I thought you were an exception?"

"Oh, no, though Colonel Royal and all of his officers treat me as though I held a commission, for they are very kind to me."

"I am glad to see it, and the ladies like you, too; in fact, you are a very popular man, Buffalo Bill," and the scout raised his hat at the compliment.

He had gotten the Don at his ease now, and felt sure he had disarmed him of every suspicion of his having been watching him when he went into Death Gap.

"A desolate place, that gap, Senor Cody," suddenly said Don Eduardo Vincente, his thought reverting to his being discovered there with Bessie Bond.

"It is, indeed, sir, and a place I would shun by night."

"You surely do not believe the stories told of its being haunted?"

"Do you, Don Eduardo?" asked Buffalo Bill, in a mysterious way.

"Well, I hardly know what to think."

"You are superstitious, then, sir?"

"You know I come of a superstitious race, Senor Cody, and I have heard people whom I dared not doubt, say what they had seen in the way of ghosts, but then I try not to believe such stories, and yet——"

"Well, Don Eduardo?" asked Buffalo Bill, as the Mexican paused in what he was about to say.

"I was going to remark, senor, that I would not care to go alone to that place after dark."

"It was from this reason that I felt sorry that I had done that which might make that brave girl go, and so I went before nightfall to pass through and head her off, telling her that I gave up the wager."

"But there I found her, as cool as you please, and not in the least ruffled, though I admit it was not nightfall."

"She would not have cared for that, sir, for I do not believe she knows what it is to fear."

"That is my opinion, Cody, and she is a very clever girl, beautiful, accomplished and a mystery, for I cannot understand her."

"No one else does, either."

"True, very true; but my opinion is that she has

had some great heart trouble, and that is why her mother brought her here to these wilds and settled upon that ranch in the valley, where one and all are most mysterious persons, even to Miss Bessie, who has become as reckless as a cowboy."

"She does not seem to be at all times happy, sir."

"No, she does not, and I only wish she would fall in love with some nice fellow and marry him, for it would make her life a happy one."

"Perhaps, though, it depends upon the man, and she is one to have strong preferences."

"Have you noticed this, Cody?" quickly asked the Don.

"Well, yes, though perhaps I should not say so."

"Will you tell me the one you supposed her most partial to?"

"Pardon me, Don Eduardo, for saying so, but I considered you to be her favorite," and the scout smiled, grimly, for it was night now, and the Don could not see his face.

The Don was silent at the words of the scout, and, as the fort lights were now in sight, Buffalo Bill changed the subject.

Soon after they rode into the stockade walls, for the Don was going to the Officer's Club, and not to his own quarters toward the settlement.

The scout went to his own quarters, looked well after his horse, and then, brushing off the dust of travel, and making his toilet, he went to report his return to Colonel Royal.

"Well, Cody, glad to see you back again; but did you reach Overland City?" asked the colonel.

"Yes, sir; I passed some hours there."

"A quick trip you made of it, indeed."

"You must be tired, so sit down."

The scout was tired, and accepted the invitation.

"Did you find your man?"

"Yes, sir."

"Our English friends will be glad of this. Have you seen them?"

"No, sir; I came first to report to you."

"They are spending the evening at Chaplain Burton's, for both seem deeply interested in the Daughter of the Fifth; but they will have to become American citizens and join the Fifth as privates, if they wish to win her," and the colonel laughed.

"Yes, sir, and it would tax a man's love rather strongly to give rank and wealth for a ladylove."

"She would be sure, at least, he was in earnest;

but is your news for Lord Lonsfield and Sir John important enough for me to send after them to come here?"

"Oh, no, sir. I saw Boss Brewer and took down in my notebook all that he said."

"He did take Mr. Golden to the settlement, then?"

"Yes, sir, and told me much about Mr. Golden and his family."

"Was it the same man?"

"Without doubt, sir."

"He must have been married then?"

"He was, sir."

"Well, I'll hear it all later; so now tell me if you have any news to report outside of your mission."

"I sent your dispatches, sir, by Pony Rider Express."

"Thank you."

"And, now, I have a report to make, sir."

"I am ready to hear it, Cody."

"Colonel Royal, I have to take you into my confidence, and make known to you a secret which you will not be supposed to know."

"Well?"

"I know you will hold my confidence, sir, and I trust you will feel I have acted for the best."

"But I deem it my duty to tell you the truth, and will ask you to kindly allow me to manage the affair as I have begun, and as I deem best."

"I rely sufficiently upon your honor and discretion, Cody, to make you such a promise, and I do."

"Thank you, Colonel Royal, for your words remove a load from my mind, as I did not wish to hold a secret in which I had taken the grave responsibility of allowing a guilty man to escape punishment."

"Ah, so serious as that?"

"You shall hear, sir, the whole truth, and if you decide that I have not overstepped my authority, I will feel that you will consider the secret as unknown to you."

"I will not go back upon my word to you, Cody."

"I feel that, sir, and I feel the greater boldness to make the request, as I have saved the government a large sum of money."

"That is good news, and you are always rendering the government valuable services, I am glad to say, Cody."

"Here is a letter, sir, given me by Paymaster Lloyd for you."

"Oh! you saw Lloyd, then?"

"Yes, sir; I was so fortunate."

The colonel took the letter and read it.

It was as follows:

I beg to report to you that upon the morning of the 10th the coach in which I was a passenger was held up by road-agents in the mountains, twelve miles from Overland City, and they having knowledge of my carrying with me a large sum of government money, I was being forced to yield it up at the muzzle of a revolver, when, I am pleased to report, Buffalo Bill came to the rescue alone, though not knowing the odds he had to face.

He shot down one of the robbers at the head of the horses, when the cowardly driver dashed away, in spite of my commands and entreaties to him to stop, and left Cody to his fate.

The fellow never drew rein until he reached Overland City, going at breakneck speed, and killing his team.

I seized the horses at the Overland stables, in the name of the government, and with a number of ready volunteers, started out to the scene, but met Cody coming in, with the dead outlaw hanging across his saddle.

Cody will himself report to you what followed after his arrival upon the scene, and through which daring act the government money was saved, and, perhaps, my life.

I have the honor to be, etc.

Such was the letter of the paymaster, who was a man well known to the colonel, and one whom he knew had made no exaggerated report of what had occurred.

The colonel read the letter through most carefully, and when he had finished, he looked up at the scout and said:

"You took big chances, Cody, to run on a party you did not know the strength of."

"I saw that the coach was held up, and trusted in a surprise to put the outlaws to flight, sir."

"Fortunately, your confidence met with success, and I congratulate you upon your nerve and achievements."

"But you have a report to make to me, I believe."

"Yes, sir, I have," was the reply of Buffalo Bill, and he began his story at once.

CHAPTER CXLVII.

BUFFALO BILL'S REPORT.

Buffalo Bill began his report to the colonel in a low, modest tone.

He knew that he had to make a confession which would show that he had assumed considerable authority, but he believed that he had acted for the best.

How the colonel would regard it remained to be seen.

"I arrived on the stage trail, sir," he began, "just after the coach had gone by, for I could hear the rumbling of the wheels.

"The trail wound just there, forming quite a bend, and I heard the order of the road-agents to the driver to halt.

"I at once spurred to the scene, and, the ground being soft, my approach was unheard, so I ran in on the outlaws, dropping one with a shot.

"The starting of the coach knocked the other down with the open door of the stage, and this gave me a chance to rush on him before he could fire on me.

"I saw no more than the two, and they were masked.

"Unmasking my prisoner, I found, to my amazement, he was the very man I was going to see."

"What! the stage master?"

"Yes, sir; it was Boss Brewer, and this is my secret.

"He recognized me, as I did him, and then we had a talk together.

"He was thoroughly repentant."

"Doubtless," dryly said the colonel

"He was in earnest, sir, and told me how he had gambled away his entire earnings, and his home where his old mother lived in Iowa.

"He had tried to get time from the landlord of the inn at Overland City, and, failing, in his despair, knowing of the coming of Paymaster Lloyd, and thinking he could rob the government where he would not an individual, he was tempted, led one of his men to join him, and the result I have told you.

"I was in a quandary, for, if taken to Overland City, he would be lynched, and I would thus fail to get from him the news I might."

"That was true, Cody."

"So I took chances, sir, and told him to cut for Overland City on foot, as he had not come mounted, when his comrade had, and to meet me there.

"I told him I would keep his secret if he did as I demanded, and hunt him down if he failed me.

"He promised, and kept his word, for I met him there.

"I reported only the killing of one outlaw, and that the other got off, which was true, sir."

"Yes, and lucky for him that he did."

"Well, colonel, the paymaster left on the east-

bound stage, and Kirk, the coward driver, too, for the boys intended to string him up.

"But they failed to find him, so buried the dead outlaw by night, had a row, in which several were killed, and the town was painted red."

"I should think so."

"In the meantime, I saw Boss Brewer, and had a talk with him, and we went to Landlord Lund's private room, and I made him play the station-master for all he had won from him, best two in three games."

"You forced him to play?"

"Well, sir, I knew he was a card sharp in the mines, and that he had cheated there, playing with marked cards, and was a man who, I was sure, had swindled Boss Brewer.

"As he played with a pack of cards I furnished, he lost his nerve and the games."

"And Boss Brewer?"

"He swore off from cards and liquor, sir, and I believe will keep his pledge, but, if not, my pledge to him does not hold good.

"The next morning he rode some distance on the trail with me, and I learned all the information I wished about Mr. Golden.

"Now, Colonel Royal, it is for you to say, sir, if I overstepped my authority in what I did?"

"Well, Scout Cody, I can only say that I would have done just as you did under the circumstances, and I only hope your man will prove his appreciation of your kindness toward him.

"I shall not consider the secret as told to me, but if that man does fall from grace, it will be well to remind him that his remaining at large depends upon his conduct."

"I will, sir, but I have faith in him."

"I hope it will not prove misplaced.

"Now, I will send Paymaster Lloyd's report to the commanding general of the department, and you will at least receive honorable mention in special orders for the services rendered.

"Now, you had better get your supper and rest, for you can report to Lord Lonsfield in the morning, and I suppose that he and Sir John will wish to start soon upon their search for their kinsman, or his grave, and you are to guide them."

"It would be well, sir, to send an escort along, for it is near the Indian country."

"Yes; Captain Taylor, Lieutenant Onderdonk, a

sergeant, corporal and twenty-four men will go, and Surgeon Powell will be also along, for I know what a powerful ally of yours he is."

"With such an escort, sir, we need have no fear of raiding bands of Indians."

"Yes, for those two Englishmen are royally good fellows, both of them, Cody."

"They are, indeed, sir, and I am glad to do all I can for them."

"As I am, and I hope their visit there will be crowned with success."

"As I will see the gentlemen to-night, I will tell them I sent you to bed, for I can see that you need rest badly," and the colonel extended his hand in good-night, for he had a great admiration and sincere friendship for the handsome and manly scout.

Buffalo Bill was very willing to take the colonel's advice and go to his quarters for the night.

He had been constantly in the saddle for days, had had little rest the night he was at Overland City, and at his camp on the way back, so even his iron frame was worn out.

Eating a hearty supper, he retired, and was soon as sound asleep as a child, for within the fort he could dismiss all cares and fears, while without he had to sleep with an eye open, as it were, and every sense on the alert.

When he awoke in the morning, Buffalo Bill found slipped under his door two cards, one bearing a coat of arms, the other a crest.

One card read:

LORD LUCIEN LONSFIELD,
Colonel British Hussars.

On the reverse side was written:

Lord Lonsfield and Sir John Reeder desire the pleasure of Chief of Scouts Cody to breakfast with them at 10, in their quarters.

The other card read:

SIR JOHN REEDER,
Captain British Hussars.

"I shall accept the invitation, for it is a kindness I appreciate," said Buffalo Bill, and at the appointed hour he was about to leave his quarters when Surgeon Powell called.

"Ho, Bill; glad to see you back again."

"I saw the colonel last night, and he told me of your saving Lloyd."

"You were in luck, but come, you are going with

me to breakfast with Lord Lonsfield and Sir John and Captain Taylor and Lieutenant Onderdonk are to be there, so you will meet only the best of good fellows."

"Are you ready?"

"I am, and I feel like a morning glory, for I put in just ten hours of gilt-edged slumber last night."

"You needed it, I am sure," and the two pards walked off together.

The quarters assigned the two Englishmen by Colonel Royal were about the most pleasant in the fort, a snug cabin, with five rooms, well furnished, and with a piazza across the front and rear.

Lord Lonsfield and Sir John met them at the door and greeted Buffalo Bill as they would a dear friend, and Captain Taylor and Lieutenant Onderdonk also welcomed him warmly, the former saying:

"You had a little warpath all to yourself, Bill, the colonel said?"

"Yes, sir; it looked like war for a minute, and I guess Paymaster Lloyd was glad of reinforcements."

"You just should have heard him yell, pray and swear at the driver as he ran away, hoping to come back some other day and fight it out, at least, it looked to me as if that was what he was going for."

"It's a wonder Lloyd did not shoot him."

"I think he would have done so had he not expected to wreck the whole outfit and kill himself."

"It would have done you good to see the regiment he raised to come out and rescue me."

"They were nearly all drunk, and were mounted upon the coach horses and express ponies, with and without saddles and bridles."

"But they meant well and Paymaster Lloyd seemed proud of being in command of a brigade."

"A brigade?"

"Well, then, half-a-dozen of them called each other colonel, and nearly all the rest were captains."

"I only wish you could have seen them."

"I only wish we could."

"They kept celebrating my rescue."

"Your rescue?"

"Yes, sir; for they found me within half a mile of Overland City, and they celebrated all night, hunted for the driver of the coach to promote him to a tree, buried with great relish the dead outlaw, and then provided grave fruit for a couple of funerals the next day."

"Overland City is a great place when it gets started."

All laughed at Buffalo Bill's stories of his experiences, and then sat down to breakfast.

As the best cook in the fort, Chips, a negro, had been detailed to care for the two Englishmen during their stay, the breakfast was something to remember, and all enjoyed it hugely, Lord Lonsfield and Sir John being surprised and delighted to discover in the scout a most charming companion, for he told a good story, was very witty, and had a dry humor that seems a part of the nature of men brought up in the wild life upon the plains.

The breakfast being over and cigars lighted, Lord Lonsfield said:

"I wish to say now that our little group here are the ones that are to go upon this search after Ranger Golden, whose name has now become so familiar to you all, through Sir John and myself dinging it into your ears.

"The colonel has kindly allowed Captain Taylor, Lieutenant Onderdonk, Surgeon Powell and twenty-four men of the captain's troop, with two non-commissioned officers, to accompany us.

"As Chips and a comrade are also to go with us, along with a number of pack animals, we will form a very imposing party."

"You have only to say the word, Lord Lonsfield, when you wish to start, for we will all be ready," Captain Taylor said.

"I well know that, captain, but now we must hear the report of our friend Cody on his mission."

"Certainly, sir," and, taking out his notebook, Buffalo Bill read the questions put to Boss Brewer by him, and the answers to them.

"There is no doubt as to the person being Ranger Golden, gentlemen, for of that we are assured, but we cannot, Sir John Reeder and I, understand about our kinsman's family.

"Still, there is no reason why it should not be so.

"Now, suppose we say start on the second day from this?"

This time seemed satisfactory to all, and arrangements were to be at once made for the starting on the trail of the lost heir to an English title and estates, to find whom, or his fate, the Englishmen had gone to Fort Beal.

CHAPTER CXLVIII.

THE "DAUGHTER OF THE REGIMENT."

There was at Fort Beal a young girl, who was known as "Mustang Madge, the Daughter of the Regiment," and she called them all, save the colonel, her "brothers," while she gave him the title of "Father."

She was a waif of the plains, and Chaplain Burton and his wife had adopted her, while from the colonel to the scouts and private soldiers, they all loved her.

It was some years before the time the two Englishmen went to Fort Beal to try to find a lost kinsman who had come to America and been traced to the far West, that the Fifth Cavalry, then stationed at Omaha, was out on a hunt for redskins, for they were raising Cain at that time.

Crossing the prairie one night, they saw what was supposed to be a horseman. It was moonlight, and, as it was thought to be an Indian, the order was given to surround, and soon the horse and rider were corralled.

Imagine the surprise when they discovered a young girl of six years, tied to the back of a mustang.

She was in a Mexican saddle, the stirrups shortened to suit her.

She was riding man-fashion and strapped to the saddle.

A canteen of water was hanging at one side of the saddlehorn, and upon the other a bag of course food, with an Indian whip fastened to her wrist.

She gazed upon the soldiers in a wondering way, with her large, soulful eyes, and her lips quivered with fear at first, for she had evidently passed through some terrible ordeal of horror and suffering.

What that ordeal was, no one knew; she could not tell, or would not.

But her face was blanched from its recollection, and once spoken kindly to, she put her arms around Buffalo Bill's neck and burst into tears.

Chaplain Ben Burton was along, and took the little one in charge, and brought her to the fort.

She was strangely well dressed, and upon her clothing was embroidered the name "Baby Madge," while about her neck hung a locket of gold, in which was the miniature of a beautiful woman.

Upon the locket was engraven the words:

Mother
to
Baby Madge

Chaplain Ben Burton had no children, and, as the Fifth adopted Baby Madge, she was given into the care of Mr. and Mrs. Burton, who devoted their lives to her.

Of course, she belonged to the regiment, for all had a claim on her. Every soldier gave her a salute when meeting her, while the sentinels all presented arms when she passed their posts, as though she were the commandant.

She had an income, for each soldier of the Fifth chipped in twenty-five cents a month, from his pay, and the officers a dollar, which went to a fund for her.

Such was the story of Mustang Madge.

But Madge had a rival in beauty and frontier accomplishments in Bessie Bond, the fair maid of Ranch Isle, a home where her mother had settled, some distance from the fort, a few years before.

But, though visiting the fort, neither Bessie or her mother ever invited guests to their home.

At the fort, Bessie Bond had met Don Eduardo Vincente, a Mexican gentleman, who had come with letters of introduction to the colonel, and who said that his mission was only one of pleasure and sport, to see the wild life upon the plains.

It was thought by many of the regiment that Mustang Madge had fallen in love with Don Eduardo, and the Mexican was accordingly unpopular.

With this explanation of some of the more important characters in and near Fort Beal, I will go on with my story as it happened in detail.

It was late at night when the two Englishmen bade farewell to Colonel Royal, expressing their appreciation of his many kindnesses and true hospitality over and over again, and started for their quarters to mount and away upon the trail of their missing kinsman, Ranger Golden.

They had been told to leave their quarters as they were, to carry nothing with them excepting camp traps, and to return to the fort to stay at their pleasure when some discovery had been made to their satisfaction about Golden being alive or dead.

This they had done, and going to their quarters, they found awaiting them there Captain Taylor, Lieutenant Onderdonk and Surgeon Powell.

"The men are ready to mount, gentlemen, the animals all packed, and we are awaiting Buffalo Bill," said Captain Taylor.

"Is it not strange of him to be behind hand?" asked Lord Lonsfield.

"It is, but I have received a line from him, telling me he had an important matter to attend to, and begging our consideration for a while."

"Certainly, we can easily await his pleasure, and in the meantime have a glass for good luck," said Lord Lonsfield, and they sat down to the table together.

The scout, however, was detained longer than he had expected to be.

As he was preparing to start, there had flashed into his mind an idea which caused him to sit down, write a note and dispatch a scout with it.

The note read:

SCOUT'S RANCH, Thursday.

MY DEAR MISS MADGE—It is late, I know, and perhaps I have no right to disturb you, but may I come and see you for ten minutes on an important matter? Faithfully,
Coby.

An answer was soon returned:

MY DEAR BUFFALO—I had retired for the night, but am up and awaiting your visit.

I was aware that some one was going to sneak out of the fort to-night and not say good-by to me.

Come. Yours,

MUSTANG.

This arranged, Buffalo Bill went to the chaplain's pleasant quarters.

Madge opened the door for him, and ushered him into the chaplain's "sermon mill," as she called his working-room.

"Oh, but I have a scolding for Lord Lonsfield, Sir John, Captain Taylor and Lieutenant Onderdonk, on their return, for I see and hear, if I do not appear to, and I know that a lot of military fathers—rank and file are going off on a racket of some kind to-night, and I am left out.

"I'll forgive you, Buffalo Bill, because you called."

"I have but a moment to tell you why I called, Miss Madge, for I am detaining the party now, for, as you seem to know we are going, I will not hide it from you.

"We are going upon a hunt for the pleasure of the two English gentlemen."

Madge slowly closed one eye and asked:

"Why all this mystery and midnight departure merely for a hunt?"

"You may know both; but now to my visit to you, which is of importance."

"You are not going to make love to me as you shoot—offhand, are you, Bill?"

"No; I have better sense for I would miss my aim—yes, the target—while, as a scout of the Fifth, I am not making love to my daughter."

"Well said, father."

"Now to business."

"I am going away for an indefinite time, and I wish to intrust you with a secret."

"I am a woman, you forget."

"Yes, and one who can keep a secret."

"Thanks."

"I wish to tell you that I have no confidence in Don Eduardo Vincente."

"Oh!"

"Nor in Miss Bessie Bond."

"Don't slander a woman, Cody."

"You understand just what I mean, for you do not like her, or trust her, either."

"Ah!"

"It is true, for I have watched you closely."

"As I am found out, I'll own up."

"I cannot tell you now, Miss Madge, all the reasons I have for suspecting them, or what I suspect them of, but I am sure that they knew each other before they came here, and I am almost sure that the Texan trader, Norval, is the brother of Bessie Bond."

"Bill, I heard her call him brother yesterday."

"As I did, and with these points in our knowledge, and also that she meets Don Eduardo regularly in Death Gap, it shows that they are leading a life of mystery."

"It does."

"If so, it is for some purpose."

"If for a purpose, it cannot be a good one, or it would not be hidden."

"I have certain beliefs and suspicions, which now I have not time to make known to you; but I am not acting wholly blindly in this affair, and I ask you to go on as before, but to be my scout upon them and jot down all that you see or hear. Can I depend upon you, Miss Madge?"

"Every time, Buffalo Bill, and I'll start upon the trail to-morrow; there's my hand upon it."

"Well, good-by, my secret pard, and when I return I am sure your woman's wit and tact will have made discoveries beyond my power to do so."

A moment after the scout was gone, and, looking after him, Madge said, aloud:

"So he suspects, too, as I have done?"

When Buffalo Bill arrived at the Englishmen's quarters, he found them awaiting him.

If impatient at the delay, no one showed it, and Lord Lonsfield said, cheerily:

"Come, Cody, join us in a glass to our success."

"Thank you, Lord Lonsfield, and let me ask pardon of you all for my delay, for I was unavoidably detained."

"Do not speak of it, for there's no hurry, so we get out of the fort between midnight and dawn."

"The hour was set for midnight, sir, and it is now nearly one; but I was afraid to go away and leave some scouting work undone which I had begun upon, and I had to find some one to put upon it."

"I hope you did so."

"Yes, sir, one of the best of scouts."

"Then let us drink to light upon the blind trail."

The glasses clinked, the bumpers were drunk, and five minutes after, the party were in the saddle.

The scout rode in the front, his cloak drawn about him, for it was chilly, and Captain Taylor and Lord Lonsfield followed, Surgeon Powell, with Sir John next, and Lieutenant Onderdonk, with a corporal and twelve soldiers in the rear.

Next came the negro servants and the pack animals, and the sergeant and twelve more troopers came behind, with Texas Jack, as far back as Buffalo Bill was in the lead, bringing up the rear.

The scout led the force at a trot, for he wished to get well away from the vicinity of the fort by sunrise, so as not to be seen by any of the garrison or settlement that might be going about the neighborhood.

CHAPTER CXLIX.

THE PROOF.

The party of searchers for some clew to the fate of Ranger Golden, went dangerously near to the Indian country—in fact, to Massacre Valley, the home of the settlement in which the lost Englishman had had his home.

They were watched by Indians, and discovering the fact that the redskins were in force, Buffalo Bill led the expedition to a hill where they could fight off big odds.

He also said that he had been told by an old trapper that, if he ever got into trouble with the Indians there, to build a "three-snake fire," and the signal would bring to his aid a mountain dweller known as "the White Spirit," a man who held great influence with the Indians, though not a renegade, but one who had some great sorrow in his life, which had driven him to shun his fellow-men.

Buffalo Bill had confidence in the word of the old trapper, and he built the signal fire.

But he was too good a scout to depend upon chance aid alone, and he said, as he knew there was no escape from the surrounding Indians, that he would make his way through the hostile lines, capture a redskin's pony, and ride to the fort for aid.

An Indian chief, approaching too near the party, had been seen by Buffalo Bill, who crept out, and, in a duel, hand-to-hand, had killed the redskin.

When night came, he shaved off his mustache and painted his face, and, putting on the rig of the dead chief, bade farewell to his comrades, and started upon his perilous death gauntlet.

He walked boldly along in a circling direction, as though an Indian on the rounds, and soon came in sight of the line.

He was glad to see that it had been thinned to a sentinel line at night only and, with a word to a warrior on his blanket, about being wounded in the foot, he mounted the horse of the brave, and coolly rode away.

At the timber belt, toward the lofty mountain range, was the camp of the wounded, and he rode within the circle of the campfire's light without a challenge, or a suspicion was cast upon him that he was not a redskin.

He circled toward the outer line, and when he saw a redskin sentinel near him, he called to him to come to him, as he was wounded.

"The Gray Eagle was scouting, and was shot with an arrow," he said, in his choicest Sioux.

Whether the sentinel knew the Gray Eagle or not, he believed the story, for he came and bent over the scout, as he was lying on the ground.

The Indian made a mistake, and when he realized the fact it was too late to help it.

He found himself in a grip like a grizzly's, and when Buffalo Bill arose, the Indian was dead.

Taking him in his arms, he bore him to the horse creaking near, put him across his back and started for the timber.

He had made up his mind to say that his red brother had been killed on the sentinel line, if met and questioned.

But he did not meet any one to offer an explanation to, and, finding that no redskins barred his way, he led the horse rapidly on to a spot where he could conceal the body.

This done, he was about to ride on, when he heard a voice say:

"Who is my red brother, the chief?"

The language was the Sioux, but the deep voice, the speaking of his "red brother" convinced Buffalo Bill that the speaker was a white man.

"I am a chief of the Sioux," he answered.

"So I know, and I asked your name. I am the spirit Chief of the mountain and valley.

"Do you know me now?"

Buffalo Bill answered in English:

"I set a signal on the mound in the valley. Did you come here to answer it?"

"Ah, you are no Indian?"

"I am not," and Buffalo Bill had his revolver ready.

"You are not Trapper Dick?"

"No, but I am one whom Trapper Dick told how you—for I feel that it was you—saved him from the redskins.

"I set that signal to-day, as Trapper Dick told me to do."

"You had faith, and it has been rewarded. I am here to answer it. Who are you?"

"Buffalo Bill, men call me, and guide and scout to a party of besieged soldiers on the hill. I dressed up as an Indian to escape and go to the fort for aid, and met you."

"No need of going, for I will aid you.

"I know you well, Buffalo Bill, and the Indians fear you as they do an Evil Spirit."

"But can you aid me and my comrades?"

"I will show you. Get out of the danger line here, and at sunrise return and you will not find a redskin in the valley."

"If I only could believe you."

"See here, Buffalo Bill, I am a man who never intentionally told a lie. I am not a renegade, for I do not dwell among the Indians, though I have done so.

"I am free as the air, and hold a power over them they dare not disobey."

"Who are you?"

"Nameless and unknown. A man who has come to these wilds to spend the remainder of his days. A man who long ago left the world, and is ready to die when his time comes. Will you believe me?"

"Yes; but you say you have lived among the Indians?"

"I did so, for years."

"The Sioux?"

"Yes, they named me the White Spirit of the Mountains."

"Will you answer me a question?"

"Yes."

"Have they any prisoners?"

"White, you mean?"

"Yes."

"They had."

"But have none now?"

"No; all are dead."

"Did they have a man prisoner by the name of Ranger Golden?"

"They had," was the reply.

"And is he dead?"

"Yes."

"Can you tell me aught of him, for Lord Lonsfield is with the soldiers now—he and Sir John Reeder—and they came here to find him, dead or alive, or some one of his family."

"His family were massacred in the valley here, their home; he was taken prisoner, and, after a few years, died."

"You know this?"

"I knew him well, for I was with him when he gave up his life.

"See here. I wear upon my finger a ring which he gave me, so take it to your English friends as a proof of his death."

"Where was he buried?"

"He was buried in the mountains."

"Could you find his grave?"

"No, not now; but I have here another memento of him—his wallet, with his will in it, and I have never parted with it.

"That is certain proof, so take that to your English friends, along with the ring."

"I have much to thank you for, sir, and I hope we may meet again, for you will go with me to the camp?"

"No; I shun all men now. We shall not meet again. Wait here, and when the sun rises return to your camp, for then there will not be a redskin in the valley. Good-by, Buffalo Bill."

With this the man strode away in the darkness, and left Buffalo Bill to meditate upon his strange adventure.

He, however, trusted the strange man, and, waiting till dawn, started back toward the camp.

At last the valley was before him, and there was not an Indian in sight.

On toward the mound rode Buffalo Bill, and as he did so he beheld his comrades watching his coming.

They, of course, supposed him to be an Indian, but, as he came alone, no one offered to shoot.

"That's Buffalo Bill. He has run every redskin out of the valley," cried Scout Texas Jack.

All greeted him with a cheer as he came nearer, and then they heard this very strange story of the remarkable man he had met in the timber.

"Old Trapper Dick was right after all, for the signal fetched him, and no mistake," said Buffalo Bill.

Those in the basin explained how Texas Jack, acting as scout, had reported the Indians moving before day, though for what purpose was not known.

It was certain that every redskin was gone.

Taking Lord Lonsfield and Sir John Reeder aside, with Captain Taylor, Buffalo Bill told them just what he had asked the strange man about Ranger Golden, and his answers.

He then handed over the ring and the wallet, and, after glancing at them, both gentlemen asserted that they knew the ring very well, and the wallet had the name of Ranger Golden upon it in gilt letters, much worn.

Within were some papers and letters, and the will of the lost heir—leaving his property in England to his nearest kin.

At the end of the will was written:

I married in America and had one child; but wife and child were massacred in my frontier home, and my death ends my race.

RANGER GOLDEN.

"We need no further proof, for this is poor Ranger's writing," said Lord Lonsfield, and both he and Sir John Reeder were deeply affected.

Though there was no reason for longer stay in the valley, they desired at last to go to the ruins of their kinsman's home, and Buffalo Bill guided the party thither.

"I will have a monument carved and placed here," said Lord Lonsfield, and then, mounting their horses, the party started upon the return trail.

Upon their return to the fort, Buffalo Bill was appointed to be the one to tell Mustang Madge that the discovery had been made as to who she was, for papers found in the wallet, given the scout by the White Spirit of the Mountains, had told how Ranger Golden had married in America, and moved with his young wife to the settlement on the border, where all had been killed.

There a young daughter had been born, and they had named her Madge, after Golden's mother in England, and there could be no doubt but that the Daughter of the Regiment had in some way escaped by being put upon a horse, for she had been found only a dozen miles away from Massacre Valley.

Thus Madge was an heiress to an English fortune.

Madge took the good news quietly, and told Buffalo Bill that she had something to tell him.

"The mysterious dwellers at Ranch Isle have gone to Mexico, Buffalo," she said, and continued:

"And the don went with them, for Bessie Bond confessed to me that she was his wife, he having married her several years ago in Mexico, and she had come here to escape from him, her brother—Norval, the Texan—having tracked him here to the fort, for Don Eduardo had followed the girl and her mother, knowing that Mrs. Bond had been left a large fortune, and he was trying to make it up with Bessie on that account.

"Now, you see that, leaving me as your scout, did me a good turn, for I confess that I was fascinated by the don, and now you have done me another in finding out who I am, so go and bring those two English kinsmen, for I wish to tell them how much I appreciate their goodness in coming to look up an heir to a fortune that they would have gotten if you had not discovered me."

Some weeks later, Mustang Madge left the fort under the escort of Lord Lonsfield and Sir John Reeder, and, going to England she got possession of the property that was hers; but nothing could induce her to remain there, for in a few months she returned to Fort Beal, and once more became the Daughter of the Regiment, making the contract more binding by marrying Captain Onderdonk, while Buffalo Bill was appointed as the "father" to give the bride away.

TO BE CONTINUED.

PRIZE ANECDOTE DEPARTMENT.

Boys, look on page 32 and see the announcement of the new contest. We propose to make this contest the most successful and far-reaching ever conducted. It rests with you to do it, but we know that you can, because the first contest along the same lines has been a tremendous success.

We still have hosts of articles sent in in connection with the contest just closed, and we will try to publish all the best ones before you send in your new stories. Here are some of those received this week.

How it Feels to Be Shot.

(By Montague Eadie, Brooklyn, N. Y.)

I have read No. 25 of Buffalo Bill stories, and as it is the first one I have read I think it is very good, and I am going to try to win one of your prizes that you offer by telling of an experience that happened to me.

On the 28th day of August, 1891, a friend of mine and myself were together mostly all day having some fun.

My friend had a revolver which belonged to his father. It was a .38 caliber.

All at once he pointed the pistol at me, and I said to him, "Put that thing down; it might go off and that would be the end of me," and he said, "It isn't loaded."

The first thing I knew the pistol went off, and it made a report that sounded for two or three blocks.

I felt a stinging sensation in my mouth which was terrible. As I lived on the same block my friend took me home. The next day I was taken to the hospital and was operated on and the bullet extracted (it lodged in my throat). I rallied from the operation, and the surgeons said I would recover. I wasn't able to talk for three days, and it left me with two second teeth out and my gum split apart. Of course my friend did not mean to do it.

Some people may think it isn't anything to be shot, but I wouldn't go through it again for a thousand dollars.

A Chicken Stealer Trapped.

(By W. E. Strickland, Ellsworth, Texas.)

One night a neighbor's boy, my brother and I were out hunting. The neighbor had just moved on to a farm that adjoined ours. He claimed to be very bold, and said he was as game as any boy.

One night we were out hunting and the boy, whose name was John, said, "Let's have a chicken roast." I said, "All right," John said, "Let's steal the chicken from Mr. Landram." I said I didn't want to steal a chicken from my nearest neighbors.

The next day I went over to Landram's house and told his eldest boy, Al, that John wanted to steal a chicken from them.

Al laughed and said we could have a bushel of fun out of it, if we could get him to go with us to steal a chicken, for he would shoot three or four shots over our heads just to scare him.

We soon had the trick planned out to perfection, and all was ready now to have the fun. My brother, Floyd,

and I went down to John's house and told him we were going hunting. About half an hour later we were all three over in Landram's pasture, back of his field.

There we stopped to rest and build a fire. Finally John said: "Will, you know what you said last night about the chicken roast?" I told him that I remembered it, and I had just as soon get one from Landram's as not. That pleased John and in a few moments we had it all planned and were crawling up to an old shed where the chickens were.

I told John and Floyd to hold up the wire. But instead of catching the chicken by the neck I caught an old hen by the leg, and I never heard so much squalling.

Out came Al and fired three shots in quick succession. John dropped the wire. I never saw a boy run so fast in all my life as he did. Why, he fairly flew. The bars were about ten feet high, but he went through them like an old cow. Why, we must have heard him running for half a mile.

The next day he came up to our house. He looked like a whipped dog. He said he lost his cap there in the field, and he has never found it to this day.

A Runaway in the Snow.

(By Harry West, Grand Ledge, Mich.)

My father and I had been to Hoytville on a visit and were returning home. There was no railroad running from Hoytville to Muliken, so we rode over with the mail carrier. It had been snowing hard the night before we started, and the road was blocked up with snow and had to be opened. The sleigh got into a hole and the horse got scared and jumped into a drift.

My father and the driver got out, but I was not so lucky. With me under the sleigh, the horse started down the road. It was not a delightful ride, I can tell you, but at last he broke lose and jumped a fence, and ran to the other side of the field. The men turned over the sleigh and got me out, then we started for Muliken on foot.

Chased by a Bull.

(By Grover Phillips, Macon, Ill.)

One day I was out in a large pasture chasing ground squirrels with my dog. There was a large herd of cattle in the pasture, but I did not know any of them was cross. A rabbit jumped up and my dog started to chase him. I began to yell at the dog, when a large red bull

from the herd thought I was making too much racket, I guess, for he suddenly started for me as fast as he could run. I saw him coming, and I was just about one hundred yards from the fence and he was about one hundred and fifty or two hundred when he started. I made a break for the fence, for I did not fancy his catching me just then. I got within twenty-five or thirty yards of the fence, and he was not very far behind me when I slipped and fell down. I thought I was a goner then. Just then my dog came running between me and the bull. The bull instead of going after me started after the dog. As soon as I got up I ran to the fence and climbed over it. The bull chased the dog through the fence and I went home. You can just bet that was the last time I went over into that pasture while that bull was in there.

A Boy Who Ran Away.

(By W. E. Wakefield, Jr., Biloxi, Miss.)

This incident happened during the yellow fever epidemic. They had guards on the dividing line between Biloxi and the camp ground, and somehow or other one evening I got mad at home with the people, and I thought I would run away. So I started out. I took the Shell Road to Gulf Port. It took me one night and a day to get there, and when I got there I took the boat to Ship Island. There was a storm coming on, and as we got in the middle between the two ports the wind began to blow and the rain came down in torrents. The first thing we knew we were all overboard. But luck came my way, and I caught hold of a piece of wood, and kept on top, and the men on Ship Island saw us and sent after us. I went back on the next boat to Biloxi, and I never ran away again.

Take my advice, boys, and never run away.

A Fight With a Dog.

(By Arnold Langum, Spring Valley, Minn.)

One fine October day I was out squirrel hunting up in the woods not very far from town. There was a farmer up there who lived not very far from where I was just then.

I had heard that he had owned a large mastiff that had gone mad not very long before, and the farmer shot him.

I found out that he had thrown the dead dog into a ravine not very far off, and so I determined to go over there and see the body. When I got there I saw a lot of blood-stained leaves, but no dog. I was about to walk off when I heard such a strange sound that it seemed as if my hair stood straight upon my head. I jumped around and then, standing about thirty feet away stood the same old dog, every hair bristling up, with bloodshot eyes and jaws wide open as if the best thing he would like to do would be to chew me up.

I jumped and ran up that bank in a second. When I got to the top I looked around and there came that dog on the dead run straight for me, his head high in the air and his jaws chopping fearfully. I brought my rifle to my shoulder and fired, but it never stopped him a bit. He came on and I raised my rifle and waited.

When he got almost up to me he gathered himself up and then I saw something like a yellow streak come flying through the air. I brought my rifle around with all my might, but I wasn't quick enough. The blow was so heavy that when I missed the dog it pulled me around sideways and then the dog struck me in the neck. Then I felt myself falling and lost my senses.

When I came to I was still lying there. I threw my arm over and it struck something soft. After some difficulty I got onto my feet and there lay the dog dead. Beyond a cut in the neck and a swollen head I was none the worse for my fight with the mad dog.

While out West in Nebraska last summer with a cousin of mine, we went to a precipice a short distance from the ranch in search of honey. There were three of us. We had only some clothes line and a bucket. When we got there I was elected to be the one to be let over the cliff with a rope around me, and another rope attached to the bucket.

I was let down and had got about half a bucket of honey from a ledge, when I looked up and saw that the rope attached to me was nearly cut in two over a sharp rock at the top.

I was very much frightened, but soon gathered my wits and casting the bucket into space tied the rope which had been attached to it around my waist and called to the boys to haul up the bucket. They were very much surprised to see me come crawling over the top of the cliff. It was a very narrow escape, and I don't want another like it.

Caught on a Bridge.

(By John Rigney, Jersey City, N. J.)

One day last August as I was going to visit my aunt in Lafatte, I was walking on the Central Railroad track, reading a *BUFFALO BILL WEEKLY*. I had got to the middle of a fifty-foot plank, running across the Morris Canal, when all at once I heard a whistle and looking up the track, I saw, not a hundred feet away, an express coming at full speed, and looking down there was a freight coming the other way. I tell you I was pretty badly frightened.

I didn't want to die just then, so I ran to the middle quickly, and bending my body, back I leaped up in the air and dove down into the canal, just as the cowcatcher got in front of me. When I landed in the water, it was deep, but I swam to shore. Like a wet rat, I ran home and changed my clothes, and thanked God I was alive.

A Narrow Escape from a Chinaman.

(By John Bennett, Silver City, Idaho.)

It was on a cold winter day. The snow was about two feet and a half deep, and it was still snowing. The wind was blowing furiously. There were three boys with me, and a Chinaman was going around the corner. I gathered up some snow into a hard snowball and threw it at the Chinaman. I hit him in the back of the neck, and away he went flat on his face. He jumped up and chased me around the block twice, when I jumped through a door which led into the next street. He kept on going around the corner and soon caught sight of me again.

and gave chase. I dodged under the bridge. He thought I had gone across, and away he went across and when he got out of sight I jumped out and ran for home as fast as my legs could carry me. So I got away from him that day, but every time he saw me he would chase me, so that I had to keep out of his way for the rest of the winter, and he told me this summer, if he had caught me he would have killed me. Hereafter I will leave him alone, for his legs are long, and I may not be lucky enough to get away from him next time.

Charlie's Frog Story.

(By Charles Hulse, Philadelphia, Pa.)

I would like to try for one of your prizes.

About ten years ago my father and I used to go frogging in what we call the neck. One day when we just got done frogging and were coming home, I saw a small frog and asked father to get him for me alive to have some fun. I took him home, and after playing with him for several days put him down in the cellar and forgot all about him. About six months ago I saw the floor rising and told my father about it. So he goes and tears up the floor, and imagine my surprise when there was a giant frog. It took six carts to haul away his remains. We had to tear down the front of the house to get the frog out. I told this to a friend, and he told me to bat another one out.

Caught on a Trestle.

(By William E. Duerstein, Buffalo, N. Y.)

The time my story begins was an icy cold morning in January. The ground was slippery and icy. Before going any further with my adventure I will describe the bridge which has no uninteresting part in my story. It was a curved bridge about 380 feet long and consisted of 380 ties, thus giving it the name of "The 380 Tie Bridge." Between these ties a man's body could easily fall through into the waters of Buffalo River, below.

My friend and I were crossing this bridge to save about a mile's walk and we did not see an engine coming until it was nearly upon the bridge, because the curve hid it from view.

My friend and I were about half-way across when we heard the whistle of the locomotive. I tell you, fellows, it was a time I will never forget.

My friend was quick to act.

"Jump, Bill! It is our only chance," he cried.

Jump we did. Down into the river shot our bodies. Coming to the surface, we struck out for shore, but it seemed like getting from one danger into the other, for we were in danger of being run down by a steamer, but fortunately we were picked up by a rowboat. It was a happy minute when I saw I was safe.

Now I would rather walk a mile farther than cross "The 380 Tie Bridge."

Caught in a Dumb-waiter.

(By William B. Hosmer, Jr., Brooklyn, N. Y.)

I believe I have had one of the most peculiar and at the same time thrilling adventures that ever fell to the lot of any person. It happened in this manner: One beautiful Sunday morning last April I went to a friend's house, intending to go

with him to church. Neither of us was very anxious about attending the service, and we both were delighted when Mr. Russel told his son Harry to go and open some unoccupied houses, so that the people might inspect them. There were about four houses to visit, and when we came to the last we thought it would do no harm to rest a while.

I don't know that the weather affected our spirits, but I do know that we both felt pretty gay, so when I proposed a trip upstairs my friend at once agreed.

We were about to ascend the stairs when I thought it might be fun to go in the dumb-waiter. We acted upon my suggestion and began to haul ourselves up. We reached the top at last and I was about to step off when a very wild-looking tramp ran out of one of the rooms and shoved me back. Whether he meant to cut the brake rope or simply to frighten us, I do not know, but he had a knife in his hand, and he did cut the rope.

We began to descend, gathering speed every second.

Now that it is over, I cannot realize the danger. We must have passed through on that little waiter with scarcely enough room to stand on. Why, fellows, it was almost as bad as falling off a house four stories high. I remember holding my breath and waiting for the final crash that would end our careers; but it never came. The ends of the brake were not nailed, and by some lucky chance the groove in the dumb-waiter caught in it, and so brought us to a rather sudden but not immediate stop. We scampered from the house off to church, and our parents were never the wiser for our adventure.

The Ottawa Fire.

(By Roscoe Mills, Ottawa, Ont.)

I have read quite a few of those Buffalo Bill stories, and noticed on the last few pages stories of experience of young boys, and thought I would give an account of my experience in the great Ottawa fire.

After school was out, at twelve o'clock that day, I saw smoke in the direction of Hull. Fire and furniture vans and wagons were going in the direction of the fire, so I got on one and went over to Hull. The whole place was a scene of confusion. The buildings were ablaze and people were retreating over the bridge, so I started over along with the rest, when suddenly a woman fell against me and I noticed that she had fainted, with a child in her arms, and if left there both would be burned in about ten minutes. So, taking off my cap, I filled it with water out of a pool and threw it in her face, and in a minute she revived, and I took the child and walked across the bridge, which was burning and singeing my hair. There a policeman relieved me of my burden by taking the child and woman away to a place of safety.

Later in the afternoon I gave aid to save goods from a building which was burning fast.

In the Path of Stamped Steers.

(By Ernest Pitchlynn, Caddo, I. T.)

I am a constant reader of most all of your books and I happened to notice your prize anecdote contest. I read most all of the experiences, and think some of them very exciting. What I am about to write about happened in the fall of 1897. One night a cousin of mine came to my house to get me to go hunting with him. I got fixed for the trip, took a lantern and started out. We were half of the night roaming around in the woods and had pretty good luck, catching a few polecats, two minks and a number of 'possums. But when we started home it began to get cloudy and began to lightning and thunder. We had to come through a large pasture before we got to any road. Well, we had got about one mile from the timber when we heard a great noise, so we put out the lantern and then we could see what was happening. About 300 yards ahead of us we could see about 300 or 400 big four-year-old steers stampeding and we didn't know what to do, so we started to get to the timber when I fell in a ditch about four feet deep. The cattle were almost at our heels, so we had to lay down in that ditch to escape being crushed to death. When they had gone it was at least half an hour before I could move, and when I could, I tell you I moved in a hurry.

BOYHOODS OF FAMOUS MEN.

This department contains each week the story of the early career of some celebrated American. Watch for these stories and read them, boys. They are of the most fascinating interest.

Those already published are: No. 1—Buffalo Bill; No. 2—Kit Carson; No. 3—Texas Jack; No. 4—Col. Daniel Boone; Nos. 5 and 6—David Crockett; No. 7—General Sam Houston; Nos. 8 and 9—Lewis Wetzel; Nos. 10 and 11—Capt. John Smith; No. 12—Wild Bill.

No. 13.—Dr. Frank Powell.

(THE SURGEON SCOUT.)

"WHITE BEAVER," THE WHITE CHIEF OF THE WINNEBAGOES.

It would be impossible to give a better pen-picture of this remarkable man and of his present home in the beautiful and thriving city of La Crosse, Wisconsin, than to copy two newspaper sketches that appeared some time since.

The writer of this far too short biographical sketch has known Dr. Powell, the justly-named "Surgeon Scout"—ex-surgeon U. S. army—in his wild frontier life, as well as visited him in his La Crosse home, and no truer pard, braver man or delightful companion he ever knew, while his life on the plains has been one of daring adventure and strangest romance, as will be told briefly in these pages.

The La Crosse *Chronicle* says in its pen-picture of him:

"At a late hour Saturday night there called at the *Chronicle* office a tall, athletic-looking man, straight as an arrow, with long black, wavy hair hanging down upon his shoulders, and withal as fine a specimen of physical manhood as one could wish to see. So light was his step upon the office floor that it was not until the rich tones of his voice fell upon the ear of the lonely pencil-shoiver that his presence was made known. He was a seeker after information, and, having obtained it, his exit was as silent as his entrance, and it was not until the early streaks of dawn announced the near approach of the Sabbath day that the chronicler was made aware that he had been honored with a visit from Nop-ska or White Beaver, Grand Sachem of the Winnebagoes.

"A man of superb physical proportions, he has the physique of a giant, with the voice, gentleness and grace of a woman. There is something irresistibly attractive in his appearance, and a magnetism in his manner that makes him a natural leader and almost universally esteemed. He is a man who would attract attention among a thousand, and that not from any oddity of dress, for he is plainly attired in a modest suit of gray, but from his noble carriage and commanding presence.

"This quiet, unobtrusive, thoroughbred gentleman has not always been thus, however, for his life has been full of peril, and shadows have fallen upon him as often as the sunshine, giving to his face a tinge of melancholy."

A reporter of the Milwaukee *Sentinel* visiting this noted man in his home thus speaks of his type:

"The walls of his strange dwelling are hung with all sorts of strange things. Here are buckskin coats and leggins, all fancifully wrought with handiwork. There, festooned with the scalps of the braves he met in battle, is the skull of Wild Horse, the greatest chieftain of the once powerful Pawnees. Near this ghastly trophy hangs a bottle or demijohn taken from the Aztec ruins of Mexico, made of plaited glass, or willow, and lined with bitumen, perfectly water-tight and in a good state of preservation. Suspended below this is a little model birch canoe, and it contains the most terrible relic of all—the skull of Little Crow, the dread leader of the horrible Sioux massacres in this State. Scalping knives, arrows and pipes, some of recent origin, some taken from mounds and

supposed to have been buried with their owners perhaps thousands of years ago.

"On the window ledges, brackets and stands are geological specimens, and relics from all over the great West, the Yellowstone Park, Pike's Peak, the Garden of the Gods and Yosemite Valley. Among this singular conglomeration are the types of the highest stage of civilization and culture. There an oil painting, and here and there a good steel engraving or photograph adorn the walls. Running from one part of the room to another, and piling one thing after another into my hand, and talking with an enthusiasm that is contagious, is this paradoxical Indian leader and Indian fighter, the savior of scores of lives, yet with the blood of many upon his hands."

Dr. Powell was born in 1845, in New York State, his father being a Scotchman and his mother the daughter of a great Seneca Indian chief.

The doctor has two brothers, both living and also one-time plainsmen, now living in civilization—one, George Powell, is known as "Texas Night Hawk," and "Night Hawk George;" the other, William Powell, who has won the names "Bronco Bill" and "Handsome Will."

From their farm in Sullivan County, New York, Mrs. Powell and her three sons—the eldest, Frank, just fourteen—started by six horse team and on horseback, to emigrate to the far West, some fifty years ago. Camping by night, hunting by day, and all greatly enjoying the trip, the three boys especially, as the Indian blood in their veins had made them rovers by nature.

Their father was dead, and their mother, the daughter of a great Seneca chief, felt that she could better her condition by going West, though her husband had left her in comfortable circumstances.

One day the Powell outfit came to a long bridge across a stream, and had gotten nearly across when a party of horsemen and several vehicles drove on at the other end, a voice calling out:

"Drive on, for the gipsies shall back off!"

Frank Powell was on horseback behind the large wagon his mother was driving, and he spurred to the front.

"We have the right of way, my son, but go slow," said the mother.

"And we'll keep it," announced Frank.

The party was evidently a company going to some entertainment, and urged by their leader they pushed on, until Frank called out:

"Keep off, please, for we have the right of way."

"You back off, for we will not," cried the leader.

"You saw us half across the bridge before you started; my mother is driving, and we cannot go back."

"You shall, for I will make you," and the man raised his heavy whip.

"Hold on, for you cannot scare us, or force us."

"Do you dare me, you emigrant's cub, gipsey, or whatever you are," and the man whirled his whip.

"No, but if you strike me you must take the consequences. I warn you."

"I will knock you from your horse."

"If you attempt it I will kill you," was the determined answer, and Frank raised his rifle.

"You are a coward."

"Yes, I am a boy and you a man; but I'll fight you fair to see who backs off."

"Put up your gun then," and the man was upon his mettle, with all watching him.

In a moment the two stood facing each other, time was called, and in less than a minute the man was whipped.

"Now beg my mother's pardon," said Frank.

"I won't."

"Then you'll have to take more of it," and the fight was renewed, Mrs. Powell calmly looking on, for she well knew that Frank was a giant in strength and quick as a panther.

"I beg your pardon, ma'am," shouted the man.

"It is granted—can I dress your cut face, sir, for I have everything with me to do so," said Mrs. Powell.

"No, I want nothing more to do with you," was the angry reply.

"Then back off this bridge, for you'll have to," said Frank.

Then slowly the no longer gay party backed off the bridge, and the Powells drove on to a camping-place for the night on a small stream in a grove.

The man who had brought the trouble upon himself, had said in a low tone:

"You'll pay for this." This threat put Frank on his guard, for the man had turned back to his home, not being presentable for a merry-making.

It was a moonlight night, and Frank was on watch when he saw horsemen appear, dismount and hitch their horses.

He at once ran and aroused his mother and brothers, and returned to his post.

The men crept nearer and nearer and one said aloud:

"We'll clean out the outfit."

"Don't do it if you wish to live," cried Frank, and yells and shots answered him.

Then Frank fired, and his shot was fatal to his enemy of the afternoon, and Mrs. Powell and her other two boys came upon the scene and answered the fire of the midnight marauders, while the two large dogs also joined in the fight.

But with two of their number dead, two more wounded and fearing now other fatal shots, the half-dozen ruffians lost interest in the game and fled for their lives.

The Powells had only defended themselves against murderers, and just as their foes fled up came the party of merry-makers on their return home.

"What does this mean?" cried a number of voices.

"Your friend Tracy came with half-a-dozen men and attacked our camp," said Frank quietly.

"No, no, he would not do such an act," cried one, and others said the same.

"See if he is not the man I killed—he lies there, and another with him."

The men were found, and one was Tracy, the other one of a gang of village roughts.

The merry-makers could no longer doubt, and placing the bodies in a carriage they drove on, sad at heart. Of course, the officers of the law came soon to the scene. But when taken to the village for trial the party of merry-makers all told the truth, and the Powells were not held, as it was a clear case of self-defense.

This was the first deadly affair in Frank's life, but as he said to the writer:

"It seems that a cruel destiny beyond my control has made me a slayer of men."

Several years passed away, and the Powell family after going South, went West, meeting with many adventures.

Frank had not only become noted as a rider and shot, a youth of wonderful strength as well, but he was a natural doctor and studied hard to learn all that he could.

His knowledge of herbs and their medicinal properties was wonderful, while he took a great interest in surgery, and soon became known as the "Boy Doctor."

With a pleasant voice, magnetic manners and as gentle as a girl, he was yet dangerous to arouse.

He was generous to a fault, ever ready to do a favor, take the side of the weak and risk his life for another.

His many life-saving exploits won for him the title of the "Boy Life Saver."

But the praise he received did not spoil him, and he was ever modest of his deeds of daring.

One night he volunteered to be a death-watch over the body of an old miser who had died in his old, rambling house and who was detested by every one.

It was said that the old house was haunted, and so the miser had bought it cheap.

Frank Powell was left alone in the house with the dead, and after throwing some logs on the fire, he laid down upon the rickety sofa to sleep, for the night was stormy and the wind howled dismally without.

He was awakened by the door opening and saw two men enter, one of whom whispered:

"His cot is in the alcove—do your work quick."

The miser's body lay upon the cot, a sheet drawn over it, and as the man, knife in hand, crossed the floor, Frank grasped his revolver and springing to his feet cried:

"Drop that knife quick!"

The man uttered an oath and rushed toward the youth, whose splendid nerve and presence of mind came to his aid, for seeing the second man turn to fly back to the door, at the same time drawing a pistol, Frank first turned the weapon on him and fired.

He fell in a heap, as Frank knew he would, while the man now near with upraised knife heard the words:

"Drop your knife or I will kill you!"

There was that in the boy's face that caused the man to obey.

"Now step over there and lie flat on your face!"

With an oath, the man did as told, and going to the cot, Frank took the sheet off of the dead, cut it in long, narrow strips with the man's knife, and wetting these in a bucket of water he bound the hands of the intended murderer securely behind his back, tying his feet as well.

"Your pard does not need tying," he said, as he felt the pulse of the man, while the prisoner gasped:

"Is old Kent dead?"

"Yes, and so is your comrade! But you don't mind dead folks, do you?"

"Yes, I don't hanker after them."

"Yet you intended to kill Miser Kent, and me, too; but you'll have to stand it until morning, for I am the death-watch here."

"And you've got more nerve than I ever ran against before."

"I have no fear of dead folks, and I am going to sleep," and the boy did, after again looking to the bonds of the man.

With the dawn the undertaker came, and he went after the constable, who recognized the two men as a pair of wild young fellows rapidly going to the bad, and Frank won the praise and admiration of all for his exploit, while he thus saved the miser's money kept in the old house for poor and deserving kindred.

One day as Frank was returning home from a hunt with a game bag full, he was hailed from a large traveling carriage and asked where lodgings could be found for the night.

"My mother will be glad to take you," he said.

"Good! and she'll be well paid for it."

"Then go on to the village six miles from here, for my mother does not sell her hospitality," was the hot reply.

The traveler asked pardon. Frank got up with the driver and drove the party to his home, where the gentleman and his family were made welcome, and the youth was delighted to find that the guest was a doctor.

When they left, three days after, for their home in Louisville, Frank went with them to study medicine in the doctor's office, and he began his work with a will, for his mother had been the teacher of himself and brothers, and given him a very fair education.

During his years as a student of medicine Frank Powell had an exciting time, as one who disliked him planned to frighten him with a ghost, as he slept in Dr. Gibbon's office.

The bullets were drawn from the revolver Frank kept at the head of his bed, and when in the dead of night the "ghost" appeared, and after a warning that he would shoot, and he did so, firing six times and hearing no sound, and the ghost

remaining he sprang from his bed, seized a shotgun and pulled trigger.

The shotgun had been forgotten by those who played the joke, and loaded with buckshot it killed the "ghost," who proved to be a fellow student. The affair deeply pained Frank Powell, but he was not considered to blame in the matter.

At a tournament given by the young men Frank Powell won all of the prizes, and when at last graduation day came he carried off the first honors.

A full-fledged doctor, he made a visit to his mother at the Western home and having received an appointment as surgeon in the United States army, in the cavalry, he went to his post of duty at Fort McPherson.

Though but twenty-one, Frank Powell's stern face had an olden look; but from the very first he became a "popular idol" with the officers and men at the post.

It was there that he first met Buffalo Bill, then winning fame as a scout, and the two became devoted friends, the surgeon after accompanying Cody upon his most dangerous scouting expeditions.

His early experience, defiance of danger and deadly aim, made him quickly learn what it was to trail a foe, and his Indian blood soon brought him fame as an Indian fighter.

With Buffalo Bill as his friend and companion on many a long and deadly trail, in which the two splendid plainsmen stood at bay time and again against fearful odds, and with Frank Powell's fearless and strong nature, it was not to be wondered at that he rapidly made for himself a name, and deserved the title given him of the Surgeon Scout.

After a very severe Indian fight, in which he had been in the lead in the charge upon the redskins' village, and many were killed and more seriously wounded upon both sides, Surgeon Powell formed his camp and had the wounded brought there, at once going to work, rapidly yet skillfully, upon officers, men and the enemy.

A popular young officer with his men was taken out of his place in line and brought before others to the gallant surgeon, who ordered sternly:

"Take that man back, sir, until his turn."

"But it is Lieutenant Gray, sir!"

"I know, and one of my best friends. But I know no rank, nor creed, nor color in my work, sir," answered the Surgeon Scout, and he turned to some soldiers who had just brought in an Indian girl securely bound.

"Men, release that girl at once, for we do not war against women—the man who does loses his manhood—quick! set her free!" said the Surgeon Scout, with more sternness than was usual with him.

The girl was released, and she at once went to the side of an aged, white-haired chief.

"Set that old chief free also, for age should be respected under all circumstances!"

The order of the Surgeon Scout was obeyed, and these acts of kindness and justice on his part made him the more respected by brother officers and men.

As Dr. Powell dressed well, always looked neat and well groomed, while his saddle, bridle, weapons and outfit were of the very best, his brother officers bestowed upon him the name of "Fancy Frank," in addition to that of the Surgeon Scout, and in a number of border tales, sketches and poems he has been made to appear under this name.

The manner in which Surgeon Powell won his Indian names, Iron Face and White Beaver, the latter being the one by which he is best known, proves his wonderful nerve and utter disregard of his own life.

At one time he was captured by the Sioux, after a most desperate encounter with a number of braves, and five of whom he killed.

When overpowered at last, he was perfectly calm, and the Indians could not see the slightest sign of dread in his face.

He was taken to their village and preparations were at once begun to torture him to death.

But his face was still as serene as a May morning.

At last all hope seemed gone, but still he could be made to show no fear, and a chief riding up on the surgeon's own horse stood looking at him and said:

"The great white chief is a great brave. My people shall remember him as the Iron Face."

But Frank Powell was keeping up much thinking.

He saw that the chief was in possession of his weapons as well as his horse, saddle and bridle.

His knife was hanging by a string to the chief's belt, and the warriors about him were not armed, never dreaming that escape was possible.

His intended executioners had released his bonds on wrists and ankles, to tie him down on his back to stakes.

A death when fighting for life was better than to die by torture, and he determined to risk that one chance in a hundred.

He called out that he wished to talk, to speak to the chief, and limping badly he moved toward him, slowly at first, then with a bound was up behind him, the knife was jerked loose and driven home into the body of the chief, Frank Powell holding on until he could take his own weapons, and then hurling him to the ground, as his splendid horse bounded on, he settled himself in the saddle, and a revolver in each hand, opened a deadly fire upon every brave in sight.

It was a desperate chance, but the newly-named Iron Face won, and two days after, wounded and half-starved he returned to the fort.

The name of White Beaver was bestowed in honor upon Surgeon Powell for a great service rendered the Winnebago Sioux.

An epidemic of smallpox had broken out in the Winnebago villages, and the scourge was killing them off by hundreds.

With his usual disregard of self and utter recklessness, Surgeon Powell left the fort to go to the village of the hostiles.

He fearlessly entered the lines of his foes, asked to be taken to the head chief, and boldly told him that within a given time he could stop the ravages of the dread disease; but if not they had him in their power.

The chief listened, had heard of the "Mighty Medicine Man of the Palefaces," and told him to set to work, for his best medicine men were themselves victims of the disease.

With the vaccine he had brought from the fort, the remarkable sight was then beheld of a white man, the foe of the Indians, vaccinating young and old.

He explained to them just what the result would be, and, within the specified time the disease began to lose its epidemic form, was then checked, and health came back once more to the stricken village.

So pleased were all, so delighted was the head chief that he bestowed upon Surgeon Powell the great Indian honor of wearing the robe of twelve white beaver skins, and named him "The White Beaver," a sacred animal with the Indians.

That robe is carefully treasured to-day by the Surgeon Scout, and he still holds the rank of Great Medicine Chief of the Winnebagoes, who, as a tribe, visit him every year for a couple of weeks, going into camp upon his lands near La Crosse, and supported for the time at his expense.

Such, in fact, is the strange story of Dr. Frank Powell, several times Mayor of La Crosse, Wis., and now a practicing physician in that city and the Northwest, but who still loves to talk over with his old pals of the plains the thrilling days when he was known as the Surgeon Scout.

A Dangerous Log Ride.

(By Frank A. Booth, Montreal, Canada.)

One fine afternoon in August last year I and some other campmates got on a pile of logs on a log jam. The river was very swift at that particular place, but the logs were held in place by means of booms and piers. The logmen had just come, and had begun to work as we came down. I was standing on a large log watching them when all at once the strain on the boom became too much and it broke, letting the logs go down stream as it did so. We all floated on for a ways when the log I was on being on the outside got away from the rest. I did not notice it until too late.

I looked where I was going and found my log was heading for the worst part of the river. The water was running very swift at this place and, besides, there were rocks.

I had a rough time, I can tell you, going through this place, and I hurt my foot on one rock. When I got through all right I jumped off the log and swam to the other logs. Then I got on them and thence got ashore, where I limped to camp. The fellows teased me about it, but I did what no one else in the camp did. But I don't want to do it again, though.

THE WINNERS

IN THE

Prize Anecdote Contest.

Here are the winners, boys, in the Contest which closed December 1st, for the best anecdotes.

So many stories were received, numbering many thousand, that it was clearly impossible to publish even all of the best ones, and the contestants who saw their anecdotes in the Prize Anecdote Department will see how lucky they were. However, the prize winners have been chosen from all of those who entered.

We take great pleasure in announcing that the winners of the two first prizes, who each receive a first-class Spalding Athletic Sweater, are:

HARRY C. ENYARD, Harrison, Ky., for his story entitled "Caught in a Cyclone," published in No. 31.

HOWARD PILCHARD, Pomeroy, O., for his story entitled "Entombed in a Coal Mine," published in No. 28.

The winners of the second prizes, who each receive a pair of Raymond's All-Clasp, Ball-Bearing Roller Skates, are:

Ben J. Friley, Catlettsburg, Ky.; **William B. Hosmer, Jr.**, Brooklyn, N. Y.

The winners of the third prizes, who each receive a pair of Winslow's Speed Extension Ice Skates, are:

Arthur Grosvenor, Pomfret Centre, Conn.; **W. E. Rizer**, Wichita, Kansas; **Fred Reitz**, Fort Wayne, Ind.; **Starr Thayer**, Rock Valley, Iowa; **Ernest Pitchlynn**, Caddo, I. T.

The winners of the fourth prizes, who each receive a 12-inch Long-Distance Megaphone, are:

Robert E. Holley, St. Louis, Mo.; **Walter R. Branham**, Peru, Ind.; **Harry Brown**, Fordham, N. Y.; **Ira J. Patterson**, Fetterman, Pa.; **Frank A. Booth**, Montreal, Canada; **Burton La Roy**, Orilla, Ontario; **Montague Eadie**, Brooklyn, N. Y.; **Thomas Durham**, Pierson, Iowa; **L. H. Bradshaw**, Shreveport, La.; **W. E. Strickland**, Ellsworth, Texas.

Hats off to the winners! They have won the prizes on their merit. Their stories were graphic and thrilling. We congratulate them! And now for the new Contest, which promises to be even more successful. Everybody get aboard!

NEW PRIZE CONTEST.

Who Has Had the Most Exciting Adventure?

Handsome Prizes Given Away
for the Best Anecdotes. : :

HERE IS THE PLAN!

Boys, you have all had some narrow escapes, some dangerous adventures in your lives! Perhaps it was the capsizing of a boat, or the scaling of a cliff, or a close shave in a burning building, or something else equally thrilling!

Write It Up Just As It Happened!

We offer a handsome prize for the most exciting and best-written anecdote sent us by any reader of **BUFFALO BILL WEEKLY**. The incident, of course, must relate to something that happened to the writer himself, and it must also be strictly true.

It makes no difference how short the articles are, but no contribution must be longer than 500 words.

Send in your anecdotes at once, boys. We are going to publish all of the best ones during the progress of the contest.

Remember: Whether your contribution wins a prize or not, it stands a good chance of being published, together with your name.

HERE ARE THE PRIZES!

The Two Boys who send us the best anecdotes will each receive a first-class Spalding Standard Athletic Sweater, made of the finest Australian lambs' wool, exceedingly soft. Full fashioned to body and arms, and without seams of any kind. Colors: White, navy blue, black and maroon.

The Two Boys who send us the next best anecdotes will each receive a pair of Raymond's All-Clasp Ball-Bearing Roller Skates. Bearings of the finest tempered steel, with 128 steel balls. For speed no skate has ever approached it.

The Five Boys who send us the next best anecdotes will each receive a pair of Winslow's Speed Extension Ice Skates, with extension foot plates. These skates have detachable welded steel racing runners, also an extra set of runners for fancy skating.

The Ten Boys who send us the next best anecdotes will each receive a Spalding 12-inch "Long Distance" Megaphone. Made of fireboard, capable of carrying the sound of a human voice one mile, and in some instances, two miles. More fun than a barrel of monkeys.

To become a contestant for these prizes, cut out the **Anecdote Contest Coupon**, printed herewith, fill it out properly, and send it to **BUFFALO BILL WEEKLY**, care of Street & Smith, 238 William St., New York City, together with your anecdote. No anecdote will be considered that does not have this coupon accompanying it.

COUPON.

"Buffalo Bill Weekly" Anecdote Contest.

Prize Contest No. 2.

Date.....1901

Name.....

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- 15—Buffalo Bill's Unknown Ally; or, The Brand of the Red Arrow.
- 16—Buffalo Bill's Pards in Gray; or, On the Death Trails of the Wild West.
- 17—Buffalo Bill's Death Deal; or, The Queen of Gold Canyon.
- 18—Buffalo Bill at Graveyard Gap; or, The Doomed Driver of the Overland.
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- 25—Chapters 72-82 describe Buffalo Bill's Warning.
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